

# **FOREST COUNTY WISCONSIN**

**County Forest**

**15 Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan**

**(Chapters 100-800)**



**FOREST COUNTY**  
**COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**

**2006-2020**

**Forest County Forestry Department**

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# **County Forest 15 Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan**

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COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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100 **MISSION STATEMENT**

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Natural resources, such as those provided by the County Forest, are the base for addressing the ecological and socioeconomic needs of society. The mission of the County Forest is to manage, conserve and protect these resources on a sustainable basis for present and future generations.

County Forest resources should be protected from natural catastrophes such as fire, insect and disease outbreaks, and from human threats such as encroachment, over-utilization, environmental degradation and excessive development. While managed for environmental needs including watershed protection, protection of rare plant and animal communities, and maintenance of plant and animal diversity, these same resources must also be managed and provide for sociological needs, including provisions for recreational opportunities and the production of raw materials for wood-using industries.

Management must balance local needs with broader state, national and global concerns through integration of sound forestry, wildlife, fisheries, endangered resources, water quality, soil, and recreational practices. Management will provide this variety of products and amenities for the future through the use of sustainable forest management practices.

105 **GOAL OF THE COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN  
(Hereafter referred to as the “Plan”)**

To administer the County Forest program consistent with the mission statement and the purpose and direction of the County Forest Law as stated in s. 28.11, Wis. Stats., giving consideration to input from citizens and groups. The purpose of the County Forest Law being:

“ ... to provide the basis for a permanent program of county forests and to enable and encourage the planned development and management of the County Forests for optimum production of forest products together with recreational opportunities, wildlife, watershed protection and stabilization of stream flow, giving full recognition to the concept of multiple use to assure maximum public benefits; to protect the public rights, interests and investments in such lands; and to compensate the counties for the public uses, benefits and privileges these lands

provide; all in a manner which will provide a reasonable revenue to the towns in which such lands lie.”

Each state agency, whenever it administers a law under which a local governmental unit prepares a plan, is encouraged to design its planning requirements in a manner that makes it practical for local governmental units to incorporate these plans into local comprehensive plans prepared under s. 66.1001 Wis. Stats (i.e. “Smart Growth” planning) s. 1.13(3) Wis. Stats. This County Forest plan will complement, and should be a part of local comprehensive planning efforts (e.g. Smart growth). There are similarities in the considerations of both plans although the County Forest plan is of smaller scale and focused by s. 28.11, Wis. Stats. In an effort to ensure that the values of the Forest County Forest are fully recognized, protected and infused into local planning, the County Forest Administrator will participate in local and county, planning efforts.

## **110 CHAPTER 100 OBJECTIVE**

1. To recognize the authority of the County and State in the administration and development of operating policies on the Forest County Forest.
2. To provide the reader of the plan with background information regarding the County Forest.

## **115 STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

The County Forest Law (s 28.10 and 28.11 Wis. Stats.) provides the authority to establish, develop, and manage a permanent County Forest Program. (For the full text of the County Forest Law refer to Chapter 900 (905.1).

## **120 COUNTY AUTHORITY**

The County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan is the official County Forest authority. The Forestry Committee of the County Board (*hereafter referred to as the “committee”*) enforces the regulations governing the use of the County Forest.

### **120.1 ORDINANCES**

The county ordinances that apply to the administration and management of the Forest County Forest can be found in Chapter 900.

**125.1 STATEWIDE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT**

In 1927, the State Legislature passed the Forest Crop Law, authorizing counties to create county forests. An opinion of the Attorney General with reference to the Forest Crop Law stated that the counties would be exempt from the owner's share of annual tax. The Legislature of 1929 specifically provided that counties were exempt from paying the "acreage share" required of private owners. The legislature of 1931 amended the County Forest Reserve Law of 1929. It provided for the payment of acreage aids to Towns for County Forest land and an additional annual State payment of \$.10 /acre to the Counties for all land within county forests entered under the Forest Crop Law. Counties were required to spend this aid money solely for the development of the county forest. In return for this aid, the state originally collected a seventy-five percent severance tax on the products cut on county forests. This was reduced to fifty percent in 1937 and then to twenty percent of gross sales in 1963.

In 1963, several major revisions were made to the County Forest Law. The most notable change was the creation of a permanent program of forests that would be managed in accordance with a 15 year Comprehensive Land Use Plan developed by the county, with the assistance of the Department of Natural Resources. The severance tax on harvested forest products still remains at 20% of the stumpage value, although no severance tax is collected if counties do not have a loan balance. A number of grants, loans and shared revenue payments are currently available to counties to help offset any losses in taxes due to public ownership. The acreage share payment to towns is currently \$.30/acre. In addition, towns with county forest land receive a minimum of 10% of the stumpage revenue from their respective County Forest each year. Stumpage revenues exceed \$18,000,000 annually in the State.

Twenty-nine counties in Wisconsin now own approximately two and one third million acres entered under the County Forest Law.



## 125.2 COUNTY FOREST PROGRAM HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

At one time, much of Wisconsin was covered with magnificent stands of pine, hemlock, and hardwoods on the highlands, and cedar, spruce, and balsam on its lowlands. From 1860 to about 1910, these forests provided raw material for a thriving lumber industry. The need to supply lumber for a growing nation, and the lack of sound forest management, resulted in over-harvest of the forests and degradation of the landscape. Immigrants rushed to these newly cleared lands, hungry for a place to farm and build their lives. But in just a few years, the soils gave out, catastrophic fires occurred, and many people were forced to seek their fortunes elsewhere. The land was left exhausted and tax delinquent. The Wisconsin County Forest program originated with the taking of these tax delinquent lands.

## 125.3 FOREST COUNTY FOREST HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT

At one time, Forest County was covered with magnificent stands of pine, hemlock and hardwoods on the highlands, and cedar, spruce and balsam on its lowlands. These forests provided raw materials for a thriving lumbering industry from 1860 to about 1910. As a result of the clamor to conquer the wilderness and supply lumber to house the masses, due to the lack of proper forest management, the forests were nearly destroyed. The logging slash was ideal for wildfire which essentially culminated with the Peshtigo fire. Immigrants rushed to these newly cleared lands hungry for a place to farm and build their lives. But in just a few years, the soils gave out and these people left to seek their fortunes elsewhere, leaving the land increasingly barren and tax delinquent lands.

A report, "Making the Most of Forest County Land," dated May 1931 commences with the statement, "Forest County leads all others in northern Wisconsin in area of merchantable timberland." At that time, the County owned 29,160 acres accumulated through taking of tax deeds, and there was an additional 92,280 acres on which tax deeds could be taken that year. Although four lumber companies in the County took advantage of the Forest Crop Law, the County Board deemed it unwise to use the law for the County holdings. The prevailing idea was that these lands should be sold to add to the tax base, but actually most of the land was sold to the U. S. Forest Service. In 1931, 51,005 acres were entered under the County Forest Crop Law, but that same year 1,582 acres were withdrawn. Two years later, 39,197 acres were canceled from under the law,

leaving 10,277 acres. Most of the canceled lands and those withdrawn in 1933 ended up in the Nicolet National Forest.

Only one town – the Town of Lincoln – kept its land in county forest. From 1935 to the present the area has been very stable. Four times since then, in 1942, 1950, 1959 and 1974, entries have been made; and three times in 1936, 1945 and 1950 small withdrawals have been made for higher use. The County now has a forest totaling 10,848.39 acres.

In 1963, several major revisions were made to the County Forest Law. The most notable change to the law was to create a permanent program of forests that would be managed in accordance with a 15 year Comprehensive Land Use Plan developed by the County with the assistance of the Department of Natural Resources.

#### 125.4 WISCONSIN COUNTY FORESTS ASSOCIATION

Forest County is a member of the Wisconsin County Forests Association, Inc. (WCFA). This Association was incorporated on May 15, 1968 under Chapter 181 of the Wisconsin Statutes, without stock and not for profit. The WCFA Board of Directors is composed of ten delegates elected from the County Forestry Committees who are members of the Association.

This corporation provides a forum for consideration of issues and policy that are common to all of the county committees responsible for their respective County Forest programs, including those programs encompassed under s.28.11 and Chapter 77, Wis. Stats. WCFA also provides leadership and counsel to County Forest administrators and forestry committees through regular meetings and active committees on legislative and recreational issues.

### **130 DESCRIPTION OF FOREST**

#### 130.1 NATURAL FEATURES

##### 130.1.1 Topography

The Forest County Forest, is located in the Northeastern part of the state. The topography of the forest and surrounding area has glacial origin. Generally, the landscape

slopes from the northwest to southeast. The fourth highest point in the State, Sugar Bush Hill, is located east of Crandon. The elevation of the hill is 1,939.3' above sea level. The terrain ranges from gently rolling to hilly on the Forest County Forest.

#### 130.1.2 Geology and Soils

The soils of Forest County have been derived largely from the weathering of the glacial drift deposits and show a great variation within relatively short distances. Since the glacial period, the soils have been modified by water action, wind, and the accumulation and incorporation of organic material. Soil types are not generally found on extensive continuous areas of any one soil classification, but are scattered in smaller groupings. However, a broad assembly is possible based on similar characteristics. The most extensive soil types are granite, quartzite, porphy, gneiss and schist. The County Forest lies primarily on the Iron River-Goodman-Elderon-Cable-Vilas-Peat Association soils, as well as areas with the Antigo-Onamla-Stambaugh-Brill-Poskin Peat Association soils on the upland sites and range to imperfectly drained sands, muck and peat on the lowland sites. A generalized soil map is found in Chapter 900 (Detailed soils information is found in the soil survey for Forest County).

#### 130.1.3 Geography

Forest County is the twelfth largest county in Wisconsin with a land area of approximately 642,430 acres, plus another 24,360 acres of water included in lakes and streams. Approximately ninety-seven percent of the land in the county is classified as forest land. The County Forest, which contains approximately 10,840 acres, is the twenty-seventh largest County Forest in the state.

#### 130.1.4 Biological Communities

Wisconsin's County Forests are part of a larger landscape and are managed not as sole entities but part of a larger ecoregion. The National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units (NHFEU) categorizes Wisconsin into two provinces, the Laurentian Mixed Forest (212) forming the northern half of the State and the Eastern Broadleaf Forest (222). Within each province are sections, subsections and landtype associations that further group land into areas with similar geology, soil types, surface water features, wetlands and historic and potential plant communities. The Forest County Forest is

encompassed within the Laurentian mixed forest province including subsections 212JL. Landtype Associations (LTA's) within the subsections include: 212J101, 212J102, 212J104. LTA's, having common ecological characteristics, allow land managers to better plan for future vegetative communities, wildlife species, and compatible recreation uses. Chapter 900 – contains maps showing subsections and LTA's.

A biological community is an assemblage of different plant and animal species, living together in a particular area, at a particular time in specific habitats. Communities are named for their dominant plant species. The following biological communities are found on the Forest County Forest:

Northern Forest: contains mixed deciduous and coniferous forests found in a distinct climatic zone that occurs north of the tension zone. Commonly found in the 212J101 LTA throughout the County Forest.

Wetlands: characterized by soils or substrate that is periodically saturated or covered by water. This community is common across all LTA(s) found throughout the county forest.

Aquatic Communities: including springs, ponds, lakes, streams and rivers. Common to LTA's found throughout the county forest.

#### 130.1.5 Vegetative Cover Types

Approximately 92% percent of the Forest County Forest land base is forested. Forested uplands are comprised of primarily mixed hardwood and aspen while fir-spruce and tamarack occupy the forested lowlands. The remainder is classified as non-forested, including types such as open water, wetlands, rights-of-way, grass openings, shrubs and bogs. The different cover types present on the Forest County Forest are detailed under “Forested Communities” in Chapter 800 (820.1).

All of the County Forest acreage is located in one civil township, the Town of Lincoln, located in the south central part of the county. A map can be found in Chapter 900.

#### 130.1.6 Wildlife

The Forest County Forest is habitat for wildlife common to Wisconsin. No formal survey has been conducted to identify or inventory the fauna occurring on the Forest.

Numerous species of songbirds, waterfowl, raptors, shorebirds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and mammals frequent the forest. Each species, or interacting group of species, do best under different conditions, ranging from recently disturbed ground to old growth. A diversity of plant communities is key to providing a niche for a variety of wildlife species. For example, two very popular wildlife species in the county are the ruffed grouse and white-tailed deer.

The aspen forest type is recognized as key habitat for these species and is important in maintaining biological diversity across North America. Longer rotation forest communities, such as unevenaged northern hardwood, similarly provide important habitat for other, less well-known species, such as pileated woodpeckers or northern goshawk.

Permanently sodded, grassy openings within the forest, many originating from old log landings, camps, old burns, or frost pockets are vital components of forest wildlife habitat. An effort is being made to maintain and improve the quality and, in some cases, the habitat. Old skid trails are also being seeded to benefit wildlife and enhance recreational use. These trails are mowed annually.

#### 130.1.7 Rare and Endangered Resources

A review of the Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) indicates the presence of a number of rare species, natural communities and unique natural features on the Forest County Forest. See Chapter 900 for a listing of threatened and endangered species in the Forest.

#### 130.1.8 Water

Forest County has 24,360 acres of water involving 824 named lakes, and 564 miles of streams. Of this total, 479 miles are classified as trout streams.

Within the County Forest boundaries there is a variety of fishery resources. Approximately 2 named and 13 unnamed lakes have all or portions of their shoreline under county ownership. In addition, the county owns frontage on 4 named trout streams

totaling over 7.5 miles. A complete inventory of the surface water resources in Forest County can be found in Chapter 900.

Forest County also has 17 streams classified as Outstanding Resource Waters including: Brule Creek, Brule River, Butternut Lake, Elvoy Creek, Franklin Lake, Jones Lake, Little Rice Lake, Lucerne Lake(Stone), Metonga Lake, Otter Creek(North Otter Creek), Peshtigo River, Pine River, Popple River, S. Branch Pine River, S. Branch Popple River, Unnamed headwater branch to Popple River and Wolf River.

Forest County has 24 streams classified as Exceptional Resource Waters including: Armstrong Creek, Bills Creek, Camp 20 Creek, Camp 8 Creek, Gliske Creek, Bruman Creek, Huff Creek, Indian Creek, Johnson Creek, Knowles Creek, Lilypad Creek, Little Popple River, McDonald Creek, Middle Branch Peshtigo River, N. Branch Oconto River, N. Branch Peshtigo River, N. Branch Popple River, Ninemile Creek, Rock Creek, Rocky Siding Creek , Spencer Creek, Stoney Creek, W. Branch Armstrong Creek, Wilson Creek.

## 130.2 CULTURAL FACTORS

### 130.2.1 Recreation

Forest-based recreation has expanded rapidly in recent years in Forest County. Recreational opportunities include a county park, beach, campground, boat landing, 398 miles of state funded snowmobile trails, 32 miles of state funded all terrain vehicle trails, hunter/walking trails and cross country ski trails. The county forest also provides tremendous opportunities for informal recreational pursuits not requiring developments. These include hunting, fishing, berry and mushroom picking, bird watching, hiking, mountain biking, and sight-seeing.

### 130.2.2 Economy

Production of forest products and related industries derived from the recreational opportunities on the Forest and the forest products it produces are vitally important to Forest County's economic well being. Forest industry is the #4 ranked employer in the

County. Recreation is ranked #2. The quality of life in many counties is heavily dependent on the traditional resources the County Forest provides.

### 130.2.3 Roads & Access

All Forest County Forest lands are open for public use and for foot travel. A number of gated or bermed special use trails and roads are also available. Access management remains a controversial issue on the Forest. Both motorized and non-motorized recreation are provided for within the Forest. See Chapter 700 for detailed discussion on Forest access.

### 130.2.4 Education and Research

Education and research continue to be critical components in making decisions that affect our natural resources. As public needs and demands of our forest and its products increase, we must be prepared to assure that sound decisions result. To this end, Forest County encourages and supports research efforts that relate to the forest, and educational opportunities that will promote a better understanding of forest communities and management.

### 130.2.5 Trends

The values and uses of the Forest County Forest contribute significantly to fulfilling many of society's ecological and socioeconomic needs now and in the future. Changing trends will impact the values and uses of the Forest in coming years. Timber production will be the major priority in the management of the forest. However, because of the need for serving many different public interests, multiple-use management will be practiced. This may include, but is not limited to, recreational uses such as camping, boating, picnicking, hunting, fishing, sightseeing, horseback riding, hiking and nature study, snowmobiling, bicycling, skiing, swimming and canoeing. Extra benefits of multiple-use management include recreational and business employment, stabilization of wood-using industries and stabilization of water levels, to name a few.

a. Greater demands are being placed on the Forest by people using it to fulfill their recreational pursuits. The popularity of trails for various uses has lead to user conflicts. In particular, dramatic increases in the number of all terrain vehicles (ATV's) has pressured County forests into providing trails for their use and resolving access conflicts on the County Forest. Conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users are commonplace.

b. Demands for timber products are predicted to increase. At the same time, more private forest land is being lost to residential development, and forest landowners are decreasingly interested in managing land primarily for timber values.

c. Wisconsin's forests are naturally changing due to forest succession. Most of the County Forest acreage statewide is a result of regeneration or planting from the early to mid 1900's. Mid to late successional northern hardwood forests are replacing the early successional aspen-birch, oak and jack pine forests of the 1940's through the 1970's. The aspen cover type is key habitat for many of the state's premier game species including deer, ruffed grouse, snowshoe hare and woodcock. A declining harvest and a movement away from even-aged species on Wisconsin's National and State forests may place the responsibility of maintaining aspen, birch and jack pine types on the county forests. The county forest system currently has 15% of the State's public land base and 24% of the aspen resource.

d. Conflict over timber management practices will likely continue to increase as more individuals and groups demand greater involvement in forestry decisions. Practices such as clearcutting and even-aged management will continue to be controversial. Efforts to educate the public on the merits of these sound forest management techniques will continue.

e. Forest County may experience funding problems as municipalities are being required to provide more services with less money. Potential losses of revenue from decreased shared revenues and resistance to tax increases may make county timber revenues increasingly important to the finances of county governments. This is complicated by increasing public pressure to reduce timber harvests on county forests.



f. Increasing knowledge about a wider variety of species and their habitat needs is leading to a growing list of threatened and endangered species. This could lead to improvements in managing the forest and mitigating impacts to these species. Mitigating measures have the potential to impede recreational and forest management activities. Refer to Chapter 800 (840) for specifics on this subject.

g. Invasive exotic species pose an ever-increasing threat to the County Forest. Gypsy moth, Asian long-horned beetle, garlic mustard, buckthorn, honeysuckle have all gained a foothold in Wisconsin's forests. Refer to Chapter 800 (830.4) for specifics on this subject.

h. The Forest is considered to be an outdoor classroom serving all age groups. It consists of diverse communities with a large variety of plant and animal life giving ample opportunity for study and observation.

i. The forest plays a major role in the economy of Forest County by providing employment in the production and manufacturing of forest products. In fact, the timber industry is the fourth largest economic employment sector in the County.

Research conducted by the U.S. Forest Service (Phelps 1980) indicated that each 28.5 cord equivalents harvested ultimately generates one job within the state.

### 130.3 COUNTY FOREST OWNERSHIP

The County Forest is composed of 18 management compartments ranging in size from 350 acres to nearly 1300 acres. A map of these compartments can be found in Chapter 900.

COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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**200 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

Objectives

1. To comply with and implement the provisions of the County Forestry Ordinance.
2. To administer and manage the County Forest in accordance with s. 28.11, Wis. Stats.
3. To cooperate with the Department of Natural Resources and other agencies and organizations in the interest of furthering the optimum management of the forest on an infinitely sustainable basis.
4. To provide adequate financial support for the program by using county designated revenues and appropriations, along with funds available from federal and state sources.
5. To maintain an adequate system of accounts, records and reports for the orderly administration of the forest and to provide the basis of evaluation of program needs and implementation.
6. To facilitate the administration of the forest by authorizing personnel, equipment and facilities necessary to assist the Committee and the administrator in carrying out their duties.
7. To establish and maintain a system of roads on the county forest that will meet the needs of timber harvest, recreation access, forest protection and development, as well as other uses.

**205 ROLES**

The County and the Department of Natural Resources have a mutual interest in administration of the County Forest. It shall be the policy of the County Board through the Forestry Committee to cooperate to the fullest extent with county and state personnel in carrying out the program on the county forest and to perpetuate the State/County partnership through the administration of the county forest. The County/State roles are further defined in the Public Forest Lands handbook, 2460.5.

## 205.1 COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Forest County Forestry Ordinance No. 92 adopted November 12, 1965, prescribes rules and regulations for the administration of county powers and duties as provided in Chapter 26, 27, 28, 29 and 59 of the Wisconsin Statutes, under which the Forest County Board of Supervisors is granted specific powers relative to the establishment, development, management and protection of the county forest to provide sustained yield of forest products for commercial use and the associated benefits of soil and water conservation, scenic and recreational values, and fish and wildlife resources; all in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

### 205.1.1 Forestry Committee

The Board of Supervisors assigns the administration of the County Forest to the Forestry Committee as detailed below.

1. Preparation of an annual work plan and budget for the ensuing calendar year to be presented for the Board's approval.
2. Establishment and maintenance of the facilities necessary to conduct forest operations.
3. Negotiations for and acquisition of lands necessary to further the objectives of the county forest.
4. Review and approval of all proposed recreation projects on the county forest lands.
5. Cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources on all matters pertaining to natural resource management on the county forest.
6. Participation in all other activities involved in the execution and administration of forestry operations in the county forest program.
7. Employ personnel to administer and implement the county forest program.
8. Hold committee meetings as necessary to carry out the above duties.

### 205.1.2 Forest Administrator

1. The Forest Administrator will act as the agent of the committee and will carry out its orders, as well as execute assignments outlined in the

comprehensive plan and annual plan, all within the framework outlined in s. 28.11, Wis.Stats.

2. The Forest Administrator will prepare an agenda for and will be present at all Forestry Committee meetings.
3. The Forest Administrator will record minutes of each meeting and distribute as appropriate, as well as maintain a permanent minutes record.
4. The Forest Administrator will serve as the Director of the Forestry Department in coordinating the programs of work of staff members and other matters as directed by the Committee.
5. The Forest Administrator will supervise the timber sale program, tree planting, site preparation, timber stand improvement, road and firebreak construction and maintenance, land acquisition, entry and withdrawal of county forest lands, trespass investigations, and long and short term planning, all within the restrictions of s. 28.11 Wis.Stats.

## 205.2 DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The role of the Department of Natural Resources in the County

Forest program is to:

- (1) Encourage technically sound management of the County Forest resources.
- (2) Protect the public rights, benefits and investments in County Forest lands.
- (3) Administer state compensation to the county for the public rights, benefits and privileges the county forest lands provide as required by s. 28.11 (a), (b), Wis. Stats.
- (4) Provide County Forest assistance consistent with those identified in Chapter 200 of the Public Forest Lands handbook and as referenced in Chapter 900 of this plan.

### 205.2.1 Central Office - Madison

It is the function of this office to:

1. Certify and make forest aid payments (variable acreage and project loans) to the county and audit county expenditures of the forestry fund account pursuant to s. 28.11 (8) (b) Wis. Stats.
2. Certify and make acreage payments to towns pursuant to s. 28.11 (8) (a) Wis. Stats.

3. Maintain and certify County Forest acreage by township, and audit distribution of severance share payments (s. 28.11(9)(2d) Wis. Stats.) made annually by the counties.
4. Collect severance share payments of not less than twenty percent of actual stumpage sales value on timber cut from the County Forest pursuant to s. 28.11 (9) (a) Wis. Stats.
5. Administer various aids and grants pertaining, but not limited to, the County Forest program.
6. Assist with development and implementation of the County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
7. Interpret and administer the laws and regulations set forth by the Legislature and the Natural Resources Board.
8. Review and approve or deny applications for withdrawal and entry of lands into the County Forest Law program.

#### 205.2.2 Local Office

Field representatives of the Department of Natural Resources are available to provide technical advice and assistance to the county in natural resources management. This assistance includes, but is not limited to the following:

##### 205.2.2.1 Forest Management

The forester designated by the Department of Natural Resources to serve as liaison to the Committee will provide technical assistance in managing the resources of the county forest. The forester's duties include the following:

1. Attend all Committee meetings and any county board meetings as requested.
2. Assist in establishing, inspecting, and administering timber sales in cooperation with county forest personnel.
3. Process timber sale approvals, cutting notices and reports.
4. Maintain for the Department a record of forest management accomplishments, forms and maps.
5. Assist in preparation of projects, plans and estimates.
6. Provide assistance to the Committee in the preparation of the annual budget, annual work plan and the County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
7. Assist in County Forest timber theft and larceny investigations.
8. Participate in resource planning affecting the County Forest including, but not limited to preparation of maps from aerial photos and completion and maintenance of compartment reconnaissance.
9. Facilitate the application of the state recon system with county geographic information systems (GIS).
10. Coordinate with the Forest administrator all DNR activities that occur on or affect the county forest to promote integrated management. Organize and prepare minutes of annual partnership meeting as required in Chapter 210-65, Public Forest Lands handbook.

205.2.2.2 Other DNR Program Functions

1. Fire Management - Maintain a system of communications, equipment, and trained personnel to prevent and suppress forest fires, assist with prescribed burns and enforce forest related laws.
2. Forest Pest Control - Provide technical services for prevention, detection and suppression of forest pests in the region.
3. Wildlife Management - Conduct surveys of wildlife populations, habitat, and public use. Wildlife personnel use this information when providing



technical assistance on long term ecosystem planning as well as wildlife habitat management, habitat improvement and wildlife health. Attend committee meetings as requested.

4. Fisheries Management - Maintain the quality of the fishery resource in the waters of the Forest to produce a balanced return to the angler, consistent with sound management principles.
5. Law Enforcement - Enforce state natural resource laws and regulations and assist in the enforcement of county and federal natural resource laws and ordinances.
6. Environmental Protection - Enforce and provide technical assistance in matters related to water and shore land management, pollution detection and waste disposal.
8. Endangered Resources - Provide technical expertise on rare, threatened or endangered species and natural community surveys, identification and management. Assist other DNR functions and the county in identifying local and landscape level issues.

## **210 COOPERATION**

The policy in dealing with other public agencies, non-profit organizations, private individuals and public utilities is to meet the obligations of the county to the public in accordance with s. 28.11 Wis. Stats., while maintaining the best interests of Forest County. Unless otherwise delegated to the forest administrator, all considerations for special cooperation will be brought before the Committee.

### **210.1 PUBLIC AGENCIES**

The county will cooperate with public agencies, such as the University of Wisconsin Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Services, Land Conservation Committee and others, to provide consultation services within their respective fields. In turn, the Committee will cooperate with agencies and municipalities in the best interests of the public.

#### **210.1.1 Research Agencies**

The Forestry Committee may enter into agreements with the North Central Forest Experiment Station of the United States Department of Agriculture, the University of Wisconsin and other research agencies for the purpose of conducting forest research. This may involve the use of county forest lands, labor, materials and equipment.

#### 210.1.2 State Historical Society

The county will collaborate with the State Historical Society on projects bearing historical significance and will comply with 44.30 Wis.Stats. DNR Manual Code 1810.1 exempts many projects from historical/cultural review however, forest certification standards require a review on all land disturbing projects. The DNR liaison will check the historic properties map set on the DNR intranet

([http://intranet.dnr.state.wi.us/int/land/facilities/facilities\\_management/arch/](http://intranet.dnr.state.wi.us/int/land/facilities/facilities_management/arch/)) for all timber sales and other potentially ground disturbing projects. A contact should be made with the DNR's Cultural Resource specialist if a cultural or archeological site is identified on the map set. Information on the presence or absence of archeological/cultural resources will be included in the timber sale narratives.

#### 210.2 NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Cooperation with non-profit organizations will be considered on an individual project basis. Local organizations and those involved with education will have priority.

#### 210.3 PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS OR INDUSTRY

Unless specifically provided for in the County Forest Comprehensive Plan, any business proposals or requests by private individuals or industry concerning the County Forest will be brought before the Committee.

#### 210.4 TRIBAL NATIONS

The County will collaborate with Tribal representatives on projects that could potentially impact Native American archeological or cultural resources. Native American tribes are encouraged to contribute to the comprehensive Forest planning process. Gathering rights for Tribal members on County Forest land is provided and detailed in Chapter 525 of this Plan.

## **215 FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

### **215.1 REVENUE FROM OPERATIONS**

An annual budget shall be prepared by the Committee. This budget shall contain county, state, private, non-profit and federal funds needed to carry out the forestry, park and recreation program on the forest.

#### **215.1.1 Timber Sale Revenue**

The following procedure will apply in crediting income from the forest: Resolution No. 77, dated November 8, 1967, states that all monies received from the sale of timber stumpage and cut forest products or other monies received by the Committee, shall be deposited in the county forestry account. At the close of each calendar year the county clerk shall determine all severance tax due the state and towns containing County Forest lands and credit the proper accounts. The balance of the revenue shall be divided, with 50 percent credited to the general fund and 50 percent to the County Forestry fund.

#### **215.1.2 Parks and Recreation Revenue**

All revenue including, but not limited to, camping fees, rental fees, day use and trail use fees shall be deposited in the County Park Revenue fund.

#### **215.1.3 Other County Forest Revenue**

All revenue collected from fees and use permits, sale of building materials, sale of surplus materials and equipment, fire or other damage collections, or other revenue received by the committee shall be deposited in the Miscellaneous Forest Revenue fund.

### **215.2 OUTSIDE SOURCES OF REVENUE**

State, Federal and other funds will be sought and utilized by the Committee to extend local funds as much as possible. After feasibility is determined, the Committee will

prepare the necessary resolutions for County Board approval and will develop the necessary applications.

#### 215.2.1 State Funds

In addition to other state funds that may subsequently become available for county use, the following state funding sources will be used where appropriate in administration of the Forest:

1. Variable Acreage Share Loan (s. 28.11 (8)(b)(1) Wis. Stats.). The county may apply for variable acreage share loans from zero to fifty cents per acre of regular entry County Forest land by December 31. Payment is made to the county on or before March 31st of each year and deposited in the State Forest Aid fund. Application is made by County Board resolution.
2. Project loans (s. 28.11 (8)(b)(2) Wis. Stats.) are available to undertake acquisition and development projects of an "economically productive nature". Fish and game projects or recreation projects do not qualify. Application is made by County Board resolution.
3. County Forest Administrator Grant Program (s. 28.11(5)(5m) Wis. Stats). Annual grants are available to fund up to 50% of the salary and benefits of a professional forester in the position of county forest administrator or assistant county forest administrator. Benefits may not exceed 40% of salary. Application is made by County Board resolution with payment by April 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.
4. Sustainable County Forest Grants. Annual grants made for short-term projects that promote sustainable forestry. Details are contained in NR47.75 of Wisconsin Administrative Code.
5. County Conservation Aids (S.23.09(12)Wis. Stats.). These funds are a 50% cost sharing aid and are to be used for projects that improve fish and wildlife resources of Forest County. See DNR Manual Code No. 8718 for detail.
6. Wildlife Habitat Development Grant (s. 23.09 (17m)Wis.Stats). This grant, funded through the forestry mil tax, provides ten cents per acre per year for

wildlife habitat management. Advance funds shall be deposited in the County Wildlife Management fund account. Projects must be consistent with the scope of this plan. See Public Forest Lands handbook 2460.5, Chapter 220 or Wildlife Management Operations handbook, Chapter 20 for complete details.

7. Snowmobile Aids(s. 23.09 (26)(25)Wis. Stats.) These are grants for approved snowmobile projects, not restricted to county forest lands. See DNR Manual Code No. 8719.51 and Snowmobile Aids Program Guide publication for details; also Chapter NR 50 of Wisconsin Administrative Code.
8. Motorcycle Outdoor Recreation Program (MORP) per s. 23.09 (25). Consult DNR publication guidelines for Motorcycle Recreation Program and Chapter NR 65 of Wisconsin Administrative Codes for details.
9. All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Aids Program. Provides grants for the maintenance, acquisition, development and rehabilitation of trails and intensive use areas. See Chapter NR 64 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code for details.
10. Acquisition and Development of Local Parks. Provides up to 50% matching grants for acquisition, development and renovation of local parks, trails and recreation areas.
11. County Forest Road Aids funds are available for each designated mile of County Forest road. The certification is done on a biannual basis.

#### 215.2.2 Federal Funds and Programs

In addition to others that may be available, the following funds and programs will be used where practical:

1. Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LAWCON) This fund provides up to 50% matching grants for the acquisition, development and renovation of local parks.
2. Resource Conservation and Development (Technical Services).

3. Pittman-Robertson fund. This fund provides for wildlife management and habitat improvement.
4. Sport Fish Restoration (Dingell-Johnson) fund. This fund provides financing for fish management projects administered by DNR.
5. Small Business Administration (SBA) Tree Planting Grant Program. The SBA Grant provides 50% cost-sharing for approved tree planting projects. This is administered by the DNR.
6. National Recreational Trails Act (NRTA). This legislation provides grants to develop, maintain, renovate and acquire trails for motorized, non-motorized, or combined use.
7. Federal Endangered Species fund. This fund provides cost sharing and grants for surveys, monitoring and management programs that conserve a threatened or endangered species. Contact the DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources for information.
9. Other State, federal and local grants periodically come available. Consult the Directory of State and Federal Financial Assistance Programs available from DNR Community Services specialist or visit the website [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/cfa](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/cfa) for an up-to-date list.

#### 215.2.3 Other Funds

Other potential funding sources are groups such as Ducks Unlimited, Ruffed Grouse Society, Trout Unlimited, Whitetails Unlimited, local sportsman's clubs, service organizations, garden clubs, youth groups, etc.

The Committee will consider donations, endowments and other gifts, whether real estate, equipment or cash. The county corporation counsel may be consulted to ascertain whether such gifts benefit the county.

## **220 COUNTY RECORDS**

The County Forest administrator will keep concise and orderly records and accounts of all revenue received, expenditures incurred and accomplishments resulting from the operations of the forestry department. A job description, time and expense report, and

training record will be kept on each employee. All salaries, authorized employee expenses, bills for supplies and equipment, bills for other expenditures, and all credits and income are submitted to the Committee on invoices.

220.1 ACCOUNTS

All accounts and bookkeeping procedures will be handled by the Forest administrator and secretarial assistants or as otherwise directed by the Committee.

220.1.1 State Aid Forestry Account

Variable acreage share loans (s. 28.11 (8)(b)(1) Wis. Stats), project loan funds (S. 28.11 (8)(b)(2) Wis. Stats.), and sustainable forestry grants (NR47.75 Wis. Adm. Code) that are distributed by the DNR are deposited in this account. Expenditures of variable acreage share funds from this account are restricted to the purchase, development, preservation and maintenance of the county forest. Expenditure of project loan funds are governed by the conditions of project approval. Sustainable Forestry grants from this account must be spent specific to the approved project. Revenue received from the sale of equipment purchased with State Aid Account money must be redeposited in the State Aid Account.

220.1.2 Other County Forest Accounts

*See detailed listing of accounts below.*

220.1.3 Account Numbers

County Parks and Recreation

<u>Name of Account</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Revenue</u>
County Parks	#100- 17- 55200- 000- 000	#100- 17- 46720- 000- 000

Land, Forest & Parks outlay

	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Revenue</u>
Snowmobile Trail Fund	#100-49-55400-390-000	#100-49-48900-000-000

<b>County Forestry</b>	<b>#100-28-56900-000-000</b>	<b>#100-28-48610-100-000</b>
Miscellaneous Revenue		#100-28-40810-200-000

<i>Tree Planter</i>	#100-28-46810-200-001
<i>Bough Permits</i>	#100-28-46810-200-002
<i>Wood Permits</i>	#100-28-46810-200-003

*State Forest Aid Funds*

<i>State Aid Forestry Fund</i>	#100-28-56900-350-000	#100-28-43586-200-000
<i>State Aid Conservation</i>	#100-13-56900-000-000	#100-13-43586-000-000
<i>Wildlife Habitat Management</i>	#100-13-56900-000-000	#100-13-43586-100-000
<i>Timber Deposits In Suspense</i>	#100-00-24461-000-000	#100-00-24461-000-000

**220.2 TIMBER SALES**

**220.2.1 Active Files**

Active timber sale files shall contain the following items:

1. Timber sale cutting notice and report (Form 2460-1)
2. Timber sale narrative (Form 2460-1A)
3. Contract and all addendums
4. Timber sale map
5. Ledger account of scale
6. Timber sale inspection journal / notes
7. Pertinent correspondence

**220.2.2 Closed Files**

Once sales have been completed and audited by DNR only the following items need to be maintained in the file as a permanent record:

1. Timber sale notice and cutting report
2. Contract and addendums
3. Timber sale map
4. Pertinent correspondence

**225 PERSONNEL**

Under direction of the Committee, the Forest administrator shall have authorization to organize the workload of the forestry department employees and arrange for additional



services from the county social services department. Personnel of the forestry department will be governed by the work policies as set forth by the county, their respective work policies, and collective bargaining agreements.

#### 225.1 COUNTY FOREST STAFF

The permanent employees of the County Forest at this time are the: Forest administrator, assistant county forester, two parks managers, and one clerk typist. Other labor is hired on a part-time basis or for training positions as needed.

#### 225.2 HIRING PERSONNEL

All hiring of permanent personnel will be approved by the Forestry Committee, having been accounted for in the annual work plan and budget. The actual hiring of permanent personnel will be by recommendation of the Forestry Committee with approval of the Personnel Committee. Seasonal help and short-term labor for special projects will be recruited and hired by the Forest administrator.

#### 225.3 OTHER SOURCES OF LABOR

Federal and state manpower programs such as Economic Opportunity Act Programs, Community Work Experience and Wisconsin Conservation Corps (WCC) may be utilized on a project basis. The forest administrator will recommend programs that can be utilized on the forest for committee approval.

#### 225.4 SPECIALIZED PERSONNEL

Projects requiring expenditures for specialized skills and/or operation of specialized equipment are handled on a contract basis by the Committee if such skills and equipment are not available from the county.

#### 225.5 TRAINING

The Forest Administrator will be responsible for scheduling and providing appropriate training to keep staff current with safety requirements, BMP's, silviculture, pesticides, new technologies, and other training appropriate to manage the Forest County Forest. A

training record will be retained for each employee identifying the course name, content and date of attendance.

## **230 EQUIPMENT**

All equipment and supplies will be coordinated by the Forest administrator. The Forest administrator will be responsible for locating equipment, considering the most economical alternatives of buying, borrowing, renting or constructing. The Forest administrator will also be responsible for maintaining an inventory, to be updated annually, of equipment under his/her jurisdiction. Any forestry department employee may purchase equipment and supplies when he / she has prior approval from the Forest administrator or the department foreman. Items exceeding \$1,000.00 shall be purchased by competitive bidding as per Sec. 59.08, Wis. Stats. The Committee or the Committee chairperson is responsible for approval of all bills before payment. Bills over \$25,000.00 require County Board approval.

### **230.1 FACILITIES**

Maintenance of the facilities is assigned to the forest administrator and includes the following:

1. *Office space - Provided in the Forest County Courthouse.*
2. *Forestry shop building - located in the courthouse garage. A cold storage garage and adjacent building is used to store vehicles and equipment used in operation of the forest and parks program. The garage is also used for construction, maintenance and repair of County Forest equipment and facilities.*
4. *Veteran's Memorial Park - Located in the Town of Lincoln, includes change rooms, toilets, table and grills, shower/restroom, volleyball, tennis, horseshoe pit, playground equipment, two picnic shelters.*

## **235 FOREST CERTIFICATION GROUP ADMINISTRATION**

As the certification group manager, the Department of Natural Resources will be responsible for overall administration of the certification effort in both the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification groups. The DNR County Forest Specialist will work in close cooperation with the Wisconsin County Forests Association in coordinating this effort. The group manager's responsibilities will include:

- Record keeping for both the SFE and FSC groups
- Coordinating communication with the certification auditing firms
- Reporting and payment of fees
- Processing new entries and departures from the groups
- Internal compliance monitoring
- Dispute resolution

Detail on the certification group administration is maintained in the Public Forest Lands Handbook.

COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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**CHAPTER 300**

**MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

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FOREST COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

**300 MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

OBJECTIVES

Management planning shall be used to establish objectives, policies, procedures, rules and regulations, and to promote an efficient and orderly program of development and management of the County Forest in the interest of:

- (1) Determining needs and priorities.
- (2) Achieving goals set forth in the mission statement of this plan.
- (3) Satisfying the statutory requirements of s. 28.11, Wis. Stats.
- (4) Satisfying requirements for participation in various state and federal aid programs.
- (5) Providing broad long-term and detailed short-term guidelines for actions.

**305 COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**

POLICY

This plan shall incorporate or reference all official County Forest policies, pertinent county regulations, planning documents and the needs and actions for the period 2006 through 2020.

This plan complements and should be encompassed within local planning efforts required under s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats. There are similarities between the plans, however, the County Forest plan is smaller in scale and focused by s. 28.11, Wis. Stats.

**305.1 DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN**

S. 28.11, Wis. Stats. places the responsibility for the plan development on the Forestry Committee with technical assistance from the Department and other agencies. The County Forest administrator will take the lead at the committee's request. The Department, with the assistance of the County, will prepare the environmental assessment as required by Chapter 150 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. During development of the plan and the environmental assessment, public participation

procedures should be developed and adopted to provide for broad public participation throughout the planning process. Public participation and inputs into the plan should consider s. 28.11, Wis. Stats. that governs the County Forest program and provides the sideboards to which this plan must adhere.

After development of the preliminary draft of the plan, and during the environmental assessment public input will be sought. The committee, upon completion of the preliminary draft, will hold a public informational meeting to receive comment.

- Such meeting shall be properly noticed via appropriate local news media with a minimum of two weeks provided between the time of notice and time the meeting is held. Interested citizens will be given the opportunity to review the plan in the administrator's office or such other places as may be designated by the Forestry Committee.

Forest County's public participation process includes the following:

<u>Stage of Process</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Tools/Techniques</u>
<i>Draft Development</i>	<i>Inform</i>	<i>Newspaper, Website</i>
<i>Chapter 700 (Access)</i>	<i>Collaborate</i>	<i>Advisory committee</i>
<i>Preliminary draft</i>	<i>Consult</i>	<i>Public meeting, survey</i>
<b>Final draft completion &amp; <i>Environmental Assessment</i></b>	<b>Inform</b>	<b>Open House</b>

### 305.2 APPROVAL OF THE PLAN

Comments received by the committee shall be given consideration in developing the final plan draft. Following the public comment period and certification by the Department, the county will consider the comments received on the plan and assessment and will finalize the plan. The Committee will then present the plan to the County Board for their approval. Following County Board approval, the plan will then be forwarded to the

DNR's Central office in Madison through the local DNR liaison forester. Approval of the plan by the DNR is required by s. 28.11 (5) (a) Wis. Stats.

### 305.3 DISTRIBUTION OF THE PLAN

Each member of the County Board will receive a copy of the plan at the time of initial review and approval. Subsequently, updated official copies will be maintained for those regularly involved in the County Forest Program.

Official copies and amendments will be held by the following:

- (1) Forest administrator
- (2) Department of Natural Resources - Liaison and Division of Forestry. (5 copies)
- (3) Executive Secretary - Wisconsin County Forest Association.

Additional copies of the plan will be provided to DNR Regional Forestry Supervisor, Area Forestry Supervisor and local Wildlife Biologist.

### 305.4 UPDATING THE PLAN

Necessary changes in policy and procedure will be incorporated into the plan by amendment as required. Amendments to the plan will require approval by both the County Board and the Department of Natural Resources as stated in ss. 28.11(5)(a), Wis. Stats. The annual work plan and budget (Chapter 2000) and the annual accomplishment report (Chapter 3000) are appended to the plan and do not require official DNR approval.

#### 305.4.1 Schedule for Updating

By June 30th of each year the Forest administrator will develop and distribute copies of the following to each official copy-holder of the County Forest plan.

- (1) Approved amendments.
- (2) Annual Accomplishment report
- (3) Current annual work plan and budget

**305.5 COORDINATION WITH OTHER PLANNING**

The development and any future amendments to this plan will include considerations, and if warranted, participation in other planning efforts. It is expected that these other plans will also, in turn, consider and mesh their efforts with the County Forest plan. Coordination between Town and County Comprehensive plans (e.g. Smart Growth) s.66.1001, Wis. Stats, Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation plans (SCORP), State Land master plans, the Chequamegon-Nicolet N.F. plan, Land & Water Resource Plans, Forest Legacy, and others is essential for effective land management.

**310 FOREST RESOURCE PLANNING**

The Committee will support and utilize the procedures as set forth in the Department of Natural Resources Public Forest Lands Handbook No. 2460.5 and Forest Aesthetic and Silviculture Handbook No. 2431.5. The DNR forester and the Forest administrator will be responsible for the completion and maintenance of the compartment reconnaissance system and will assist in interpretation of the data to be used in planning and scheduling purposes.

Forest management plans are made by qualified, professional staff employed by the County or the DNR who are trained in silvicultural principles and apply economic, biological, and environmental considerations in the planning process. Forest management decisions are made utilizing the most recent resource materials including the forest habitat type classification, soil surveys, and forestry's best management practices for water quality guidelines.

**315 OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANNING**

The Outdoor Recreation plan, and other recreation surveys, plans and reports will be used as available in planning efforts. Additional assistance will be sought from the DNR park planners. The responsibility for all recreation planning on the County Forest will rest with the Forestry Committee.

**320 OTHER RESOURCE PLANNING**



Additional data necessary to make management decisions on the County Forest will be sought from agencies or individuals best equipped to provide that service. Refer to Chapter 800 for information on integrating outside expertise into management planning.

## **325 FOREST CERTIFICATION**

The forest products industry is increasingly requiring their suppliers to verify that the raw materials being supplied have originated from well-managed forest lands. Third-party certification of forest lands is becoming the norm for objectively evaluating the sustainable management of forest lands. To that end, Forest County will commit to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and /or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) in the management of the Forest County Forest. These certification Standards fit within the framework of the County Forest Law Program (s. 28.11, Wis. Stats.).

On February 15, 2005, the Forest County Board of Supervisors in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources approved participation in the Sustainable Forest Initiative – SFI and Forest Stewardship Council – FSC Forest Certification.

### **Forest County’s Commitment to Sustainable Forestry**

Our county forests provide a vital contribution to the State and the world by providing economic, environmental and social benefits important to our quality of life. Forest County believes that accomplishing such sustainable forestry requires a commitment and partnership from all the groups and individuals that benefit from these public lands.

### **Forest County’s Commitment**

Within the scope of the Wisconsin County Forest Law and the County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Forest County will implement forestry practices that promote forest sustainability and multiple use of the forest. The management of the Forest will include the sustainable harvest of forest products, the protection of special sites, wildlife, plants, water quality and aesthetics.

All forestland owners have a responsibility to provide sound forest stewardship. Forest County will work in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and

other natural resources groups/agencies in providing sustainable forestry information to those landowners and individuals impacting forest sustainability in Wisconsin. We will

support research efforts to improve health, productivity, and management of forestlands both internally and through cooperative efforts. In managing the Forest County Forest a spectrum of forestry practices will be employed to achieve our sustainable forestry objective. Both intensive and more extensive forest management techniques will be used to provide for wildlife, forest products, recreation, aesthetics, water quality, and ecosystem maintenance. In keeping with this responsibility Forest County is committed to the following:

1. **Sustainable Forestry Principles** – To practice sustainable forestry to meet the Present needs of society without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their anticipated needs. In doing so, Forest County will integrate the reforestation, managing, growing and harvesting of trees for forest products with the conservation of air and water quality, soil, ecosystem diversity, wildlife, recreation and aesthetics.
2. **Responsible Practices** – To employ practices that are economically, environmentally and socially responsible in the management of the County Forest and to also encourage other forest owners to do the same.
3. **Forest Health & Productivity** – To work cooperatively with the DNR and other agencies in protecting our forests from pests, diseases, wildfire and other damaging agents in order to improve long-term productivity and forest health.
4. **Unique Sites** – To manage areas of special biological, geographical, cultural or historical significance in such a way as to preserve their unique qualities.
5. **Legal Compliance** – To comply with applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations in the management of the Forest County Forest.
6. **Monitoring and Continuous Improvement** – To continually seek improvement in management of the Forest County Forest and to monitor, assess and report performance towards the objective of sustainable forestry.

### **330 ORDINANCES**

The following ordinances will be considered in all planning. Refer to Chapter 900 – Appendix for full text of these ordinances.

- (1) Forestry ordinance
- (2) Park ordinance
- (3) Zoning ordinance
- (4) Floodplain - Shoreland Zoning ordinance
- (5) Snowmobile ordinance

(6) Non-Metallic Mining ordinance

**335 TECHNOLOGY**

Use of present day technology has become an important facet of county forest management. Computers and operating systems have increased the ability to analyze and store data. The increased ability to analyze and evaluate the Forest has improved planning and management of the Forest. Electronic communication is now essential. Following are technologies available, and in use, on the Forest County Forest.

**335.1 GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS**

A global positioning system (GPS) is a system of electronic surveying technology utilizing satellites to determine location. GPS is based on satellite ranging. That means that a position on earth is calculated by measuring the distance from a group of satellites to that position. The basic components needed for this system are a transmitter (located in the satellites), a receiver (at the point to be identified) and a computer and software to do the actual calculations. This technology is invaluable for mapping, acreage determination and land control efforts. Sub-meter accuracy is available with some of the survey grade units. Hand held units costing only \$200-\$300 have also proven beneficial for sale mapping and road layouts.

**335.2 DATA RECORDERS**

The traditional data recording method is the paper and pencil system. But there are other tools that have proven useful. Tape recorders and hand held computers are becoming commonplace. Forest County will continue to test new types of data recorders for usability in the field and the office.

**335.3 COMPUTERS**

Computers are a common fixture in nearly all offices. The different types of software currently being used include: word processing, databases, spread sheets, mapping and geographic information systems (GIS).

**335.4 GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

Geographic information systems (GIS) are particularly well suited for natural resources management. A GIS interrelates spatial information e.g. maps with tabular data, reconnaissance information, ownership, name and address. It is a system through which managers can ask "what if?" and have the computer represent the answer in the form of the best organized spatial output, a map. By using such a system, managers can look at the timing and spacing of timber sales, layout aesthetic zones, buffer strips, calculate acreage and update reconnaissance files in an efficient manner. Interrelating recon data with the GIS through a Recon ArcView Editor (RAVE) program has provided state-of-the-art mapping and data analysis in many counties. A GIS can do in a few hours what often was impossible or took months to complete.

#### 335.5 COMPARTMENT RECONNAISSANCE (RECON)

Recon is another tool in the assessment of geographical, structural and compositional attributes of the forest resources. This information is collected and computerized in tabular format through the DNR. The recon system has historically been the backbone of land management activities. The tabular information is linked to spatial information on hand drawn maps or computerized maps found in the GIS. Basic resource information is collected, stored and updated systematically and continuously. The database is used to analyze existing resources, evaluate management alternatives and assist in the development and implementation of management plans. Recon is one tool used to assess forest resource information at the property level. This information will provide a data layer that can be used for regional analysis.

#### 335.6 RAVE / RAVEN (Recon ArcView Editor)

RAVE and RAVEN are computer programs that link the tabular data in the Recon system with the spatial data available through a GIS system. They are ArcView (GIS software) custom extensions that allow the user to easily edit forest timber type and stand-level features (polygons), while at the same time updating tabular records.

COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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**CHAPTER 400**

**FOREST OWNERSHIP**

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**400 COUNTY FOREST BLOCKING**

**OBJECTIVES**

- (1) To provide for the most efficient administration of the forest by consolidating and blocking lands within established County Forest boundaries through purchase or trade as provided in s.28.11 (3) (c), Wis. Stats. (for full text see Chapter 900.1), and to enter lands so acquired as county forest, pursuant to s. 28.11 (4) (b), Wis. Stats.
  
- (2) To provide additional public benefits through the acquisition of unique or special areas that will be entered under s.28.11 (4)(c) Wis. Stats. special use classification.
  
- (3) To facilitate adequate land control on the County Forest by undertaking establishment and perpetuation of survey corners.

**405 FOREST BLOCKING BOUNDARIES**

The county forest blocking boundaries are established by the Committee and by subsequent approval of the Forest County Board and the DNR. A map of the official boundaries is found in Chapter 900.

**410 LAND ACQUISITION**

Lands within the County Forest blocking boundaries or areas possessing special or unique values shall be recommended to the County Board for acquisition as they become available. Determination of a parcel's value to the County and the State of Wisconsin shall be made by the Committee in concert with the County Forest administrator.

**410.1 METHODS OF ACQUISITION**

Acquisition may be by outright purchase or trade based on competent appraisal of the value or values involved, or by gift, bequest or action to foreclose tax liens. The administrator will be the agent of the Committee in making first contact with potential sellers and in carrying on acquisition activities. However, options for purchase must have the approval of the Committee and the Forest County Board of Supervisors.

## 410.2 FINANCING

Financing of land acquisition either within the forest boundaries or special use lands outside, will come from the county land acquisition account. The proceeds from the sale of any County Forest lands will be deposited in the land acquisition fund and be available for any future County Forest land purchases. If funds are not available in the land acquisition account, advanced budgeting will be sought. State Forestry Aid Loans described in Chapter 215.2.1(1) may also be used for acquisition of lands to be entered as County Forest. County Forest project loans described in Chapter 215.2.1(2) may also be used for acquisition of lands to be entered as County Forest. Application for project loans will comply with NR.47.60, Wis. Adm. Code.

## 415 ENTRY OF LANDS

Lands to be entered under the regular classification of the County Forest Law must be suitable for forestry purposes and be within the County Forest boundary. Lands designated for classification as County Forest -Special Use need not be contained within the county forest boundary nor suitable or utilized for forestry purposes but they must be suitable for scenic, outdoor recreation, public hunting and fishing, water conservation or other multiple-use purposes.

### 415.1 TIME OF ENTRY

Application for entry of newly acquired lands under the County Forest Law will be made as soon as possible. Applications for entry will be prepared with the assistance of the DNR' liaison. The administrator will secure the signatures of the proper county officials, and the county clerk will then verify county ownership and transmit the application to the Department of Natural Resources, Box 7921, Madison, WI., 53707-7921, marked attention, "County Forest Specialist."

## 420 WITHDRAWAL OF LANDS FROM COUNTY FOREST LAW

Lands within the County Forest boundary will not normally be considered for withdrawal from the County Forest Law. Applications for the purchase of these lands by the private sector will be discouraged by the committee. If, in the opinion of the committee and county board, the land will be put to better and higher use and will benefit people of the county and

State to a greater extent, the withdrawal procedure outlined in section 420.2 will be employed. The Public Lands Handbook also contains details on the application procedures for withdrawal. The legal means by which counties may apply for withdrawal of lands from county forest status is provided by s.28.11, Wis. Stats. Initially the County Forest administrator notifies the DNR liaison forester of the County Forestry committee at which the proposed withdrawal will be considered. At that meeting DNR personnel and the county discuss the proposed withdrawal and, if approved by the county forestry committee, the withdrawal will be recommended by the committee by resolution to the county board. If approved by the board by the necessary 2/3 majority, the application is prepared by the county and submitted to the appropriate DNR regional forester or designee. The DNR may ask for additional information from the county and will then coordinate the public notice and proceed with needed environmental studies. Pending the results of the environmental studies and any investigatory hearings deemed necessary, the DNR will act on the withdrawal application. If the application is denied, the county may appeal as stipulated in s.28.11 (11)(a), Wis. Stats.

#### 420.1 COUNTY OWNED LANDS OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARY

County owned lands outside the boundary may eventually be sold or exchanged as part of the effort to consolidate the ownership within the boundary. The County may retain certain rights to these lands in accord with County policy upon transfer of ownership. The proceeds of such a land sale will be deposited in a non-lapsing, carryover Land Acquisition Account for the sole purpose of funding future County Forest land purchases within the County forest block.

#### 420.2 WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide general information in formulating and processing applications for withdrawal of County Forest lands under s.28.11 Wis. Stats. and ch. NR 48, Wis. Adm. Code. The legal means by which counties may apply for withdrawal of lands from county forests is provided by s.28.11(11)(a) Wis. Stats., This section states in part: “The County Board shall first refer the resolution to the county forestry committee which shall consult with an authorized representative of the department in formulating its



withdrawal proposal.” Section. 28.11(11)(a) Wis.Stats. also states: “The county board shall not take final action thereon until 90 days after such referral or until the report thereon of the forest committee has filed with the board.”

Consequently, if the county board takes final action on a withdrawal application without referring it to the County Forestry committee, the application is not valid. On the other hand, if the County Forestry committee does not report to the county board within 90 days after receipt of the referral, the board may act upon the application without a committee recommendation.

The regional forestry leader is designated as the authorized representative of the DNR who shall consult with the forestry committees in formulating withdrawal proposals. The regional forestry leader may appoint designees to represent them if circumstances warrant. All DNR communications concerning withdrawal of county forestlands shall be coordinated through the regional forestry leader. The final decision for requests for withdrawal presently rests with the DNR’s Division of Forestry.

#### County Forest Administrator

1. Notifies DNR liaison forester to the county forest of the date and place of the county forestry committee meeting, at which time the proposed withdrawal will be considered for formulation of a withdrawal application. Such notice shall include pertinent details of the withdrawal proposal including legal description of the lands involved and purpose of the withdrawal. The liaison forester shall review ch.NR 48 with the County Forest administrator to ensure all the required information is identified for the application. NOTE: In the event a withdrawal exchange is involved, it is very important that the county postpones final financial negotiations with the owner of the land involved in the exchange until the Department has established the minimum values of the land as required in s.28.11(11)(a) Wis. Stats. To protect the county interest, the necessary preliminary negotiations should also be made conditional upon approval of the withdrawal by both the county board and DNR as provided by statutes.

#### DNR Liaison Forester

1. Advises their supervisor and regional forestry leader immediately of the proposed withdrawal and committee meeting date.
2. Takes action necessary to be acquainted with the proposal.
3. Consults with the Public Lands / County Forest Specialist, Bureau of Forest Management concerning the proposed withdrawal.
4. Attends County Forestry committee meeting and consults with the Committee on proposed withdrawal.

#### County Forestry Committee

1. A committee meeting is held to evaluate the proposal and to consult with DNR regional forestry leader or designee and either:
  - a. Undertakes further study of the proposal; or
  - b. Rejects applicants request for withdrawal, or
  - c. Prepares resolution for county board action recommending approval or disapproval of application.

#### County Board of Supervisors

1. Upon receipt of the recommendation of the County Forestry committee, or 90 days after referral to the Committee, whichever is first, acts on resolution to approve, disapprove or modify the withdrawal application, or refer it back to the County Forestry Committee for further study.
2. If approval for withdrawal given by two-thirds vote of membership, authorizes and directs county clerk and county forest administrator to prepare and submit the County Forest Withdrawal Application (Form 2453-3) for withdrawal to appropriate Department regional forestry leader.

#### Regional Forestry Leader (or designee)

1. Upon receipt of county forest withdrawal application (Form 245303), acknowledges receipt of the application to the county clerk with copies to the Department liaison forester to County Forestry committee, County Forest administrator, the liaison forester's supervisor and Bureau of Forest Management in Central Office. Requests additional information from the county as necessary to provide adequate detail for Department processing of the application. This request must be sent to the county

within 60 days as identified in .NR 48.03(2), Wis. Adm. Code.

2. Consults with Public Lands / County Forest Specialist regarding specifics of the proposal.
3. Directs DNR liaison forester to contact the regional environmental impact coordinator to determine if an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) is required under M.C. 1606.1 or if an Environmental Impact Report should be requested from the county. If required, prepares environmental documents. If an EIS is required, notifies the Bureau of Integrated Science Services to proceed in accordance with M.C. 1610.1
4. Coordinates public notice and certifies environmental proposal is in compliance with Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA)
5. Transmits on copy of county application, approved EA/EIS, if required, and the regional recommendation to the County Forest Specialist in the Bureau of Forest Management, Division of Forestry.

#### Division of Forestry

##### Public Hearings

1. Coordinates with Bureau of Legal Services for scheduling of public hearing(s) if requested in writing by the county OR if determined by the Department to be necessary or if required as part of the WEPA procedure. Hearings are not a requirement for all withdrawals.
2. Coordinates with the Bureau of Integrated Science Services the preparation of an EIS if required.
3. The format of the Public Hearing is quite different depending on which agency requests the Hearing:
  - If the *County* requests the Hearing (must be a written request), the Hearing is considered a “Contested Case” Hearing as defined in S. 227.01(3), Wis. Stats. The Hearing procedures and format are as directed by such. III, ch. 227, Wisc. Stats., and ch. NR 2, Wis. Adm. Code. An Administrative Law Judge will be appointed, and upon completion of the hearing, the Administrative Law Judge normally makes and issues a decision approving or rejecting the withdrawal application.

- If the *Department of Natural Resources* decides to conduct an “Investigatory” Hearing, the format of the Hearing is less formal and is normally facilitated by a DNR employee. Following an Investigatory Hearing (or if neither agency requests a hearing), the following procedure applies.

Regional Forestry Leader (or designee)

1. Prepares a “DRAFT” decision including Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order and Notification of Appeal Rights and sends draft to the Public Lands / County Forest specialist. The draft shall, at the minimum cover the items identified in NR 48.04, Wis. Adm. Code. *Note: This draft is NOT a public record. It may not be released to the public upon request.*

Division of Forestry

1. Reviews and modifies draft documents as necessary. Upon completion of Department investigation of the withdrawal application, prepares a final draft decision including Finds of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order and Notification of Appeal Rights, for the Administrator, Division of Forestry. *Note: This draft is NOT a public record. It may not be released to the public upon request.*

Administrator, Division of Forestry

1. Issues the final decision on the withdrawal application.

Section 28.11(11)2., Wis. Stats. Provides the county the right to appeal withdrawal applications that are denied either by the DNR or an Administrative Law Judge. The appeal process is pursuant to s.28.11(11)(a), Wis. Statutes.

If a withdrawal decision is appealed to the review committee by a county pursuant to s.28.11(11)(a), Wis. Stats.

Division of Forestry

1. Keeps the Division Administrator’s and Secretary’s Office informed of all developments in the appeal process.

## **425 LAND SURVEYING**

The importance of survey corner monumentation is recognized in the interest of avoiding the problems of trespass both by and against the County, facilitating the settlement of those cases which would occur, and aiding in the proper transfer of property.

### **425.1 LEGAL SURVEYING**

Of prime importance are the forest boundaries and property lines in common with other owners. All such surveying shall be under the supervision of a registered surveyor. When the office of the county surveyor is not staffed, the committee will comply with the provisions of Chapter 59, Wisconsin Statutes by hiring registered surveyors to perform the necessary running of property lines. Section corners, one-quarter corners and forty corners (1/16 corners) will be reestablished where needed and Certified Land Corner Restoration forms filled out in duplicate as time permits, under the direction of registered land surveyor.

### **425.2 LOCATION OF LINES BY OTHER THAN LEGAL SURVEY**

Forestry personnel who are not registered surveyors may, with all possible prudence, establish lines for forest management purposes including property those necessary for ordinary management activities such as timber sales and road / trail locations using available equipment including, but not limited to, air photos, quadrangles, county surveyor's records and known corners. In the absence of known corners, lines abutting other ownership may be established by mutual agreement to avert trespass claims.

### **425.3 MONUMENT PRESERVATION of Landmarks, Monuments and Corner Posts**

Section 59.74, Wis. Stats., provides:

1. Penalties for destruction of landmarks, monuments and corner posts established by government survey, the county surveyor or a surveyor or public record.
2. A procedure for notification of intent to destroy such surveying evidence and referencing prior to destruction.
3. The assignment of enforcement responsibility to the Department of Natural Resources.

All personnel with land management responsibilities are directed to:

1. Make a reasonable search for the above mentioned surveying evidence prior to implementing any soil moving or cover type manipulation projects, including timber sales, that could result in covering, destruction or removal of such evidence.
2. In the event such evidence is found:
  - a. If practical, redesign the project so that the evidence will not be disturbed or
  - b. If destruction is unavoidable, notify the county surveyor at least 30 days prior to destruction giving the legal description of the monument and the reason for destruction or other obliteration. If the county surveyor does not re-reference the evidence within 30 days notice, the project supervisor will determine if the evidence has future value to the state and, if it does, will arrange for a re-reference by a registered surveyor or engineer.
3. If reasonable search fails to uncover survey evidence in the suspected vicinity, conduct an additional search if he / she sees fit.
4. In order to further reduce the possibility of inadvertent destruction of invaluable survey evidence:
  - a. Each forester with county forest responsibilities should discuss with county administrators the need for including adequate protective clauses in easements, rights-of-way, timber sale contracts, and other agreements that might result in destruction of monuments.
  - b. Personnel advising landowners regarding forestry or other land management practices should alert such owners to possible monument destruction that may be caused by them.
  - c. Any instances of potential or accomplished obliteration of survey monumentation discovered in the course of field operations should be brought to the county surveyor's attention.

COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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**LAND MANAGEMENT AND USE**

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**500 LAND USE**

**500.1 OBJECTIVES**

- (1) To identify policies and procedures employed to effectively manage, utilize and sustain the resources of the Forest County Forest.
- (2) To identify regulated management activities, land uses and special resource areas.

**505 SILVICULTURAL PRACTICES**

Silviculture is the practice of controlling forest composition, structure, and growth to maintain and enhance the forest's utility for any purpose. These practices are based on research and general silviculture knowledge of the species being managed. The goal is to encourage vigor within all developmental stages of forest stands, managed in an even aged or uneven aged system. The application of silviculture to a diverse forest needs a unified, systematic approach. The DNR Public Forest Lands Handbook (2460.5) and DNR Silvicultural and Forest Aesthetics Handbook (2431.5) will be used as guidelines for management practices used on the County Forest.

**505.1 EVEN-AGED MANAGEMENT**

A forest stand composed of trees having relatively small differences in age. Typical cutting practices include: clear cutting, shelterwood cutting and seed-tree cutting.

**505.2 UNEVEN-AGED MANAGEMENT**

A forest stand composed of trees that differ markedly in age. The typical cutting practice is selection cutting, where individual trees are removed from the stand. Regeneration is continually occurring after the stand is cut.

**505.3 TIMBER SALES**

Regulated cutting of timber is essential to the goals and objectives of this plan. Timber harvesting will be conducted on an annual basis in an effort to achieve a sustainable harvest level. Harvest areas will be distributed in the forest to

accommodate such needs as biodiversity, wildlife, aesthetics, watershed protection and other biological needs. The DNR forest reconnaissance printout will be used as the basis for planning and scheduling harvests. All sales will be established, administered and reported in accordance with the DNR Timber Sale Handbook (2461). All sales on the forest are to be advertised for public bidding, with the exception of small sales with an estimated value of \$3000 or less, or sales that would qualify under a salvage provision (s. 28.11(6)(c), Wis.Stats). These sales may be sold direct without advertising.

#### 505.3.1 Field Preparation of Timber Sales

The County and the DNR will cooperate to locate, designate and prepare harvest areas for sale. The Forest administrator and DNR liaison forester shall jointly be responsible to see that the field work on sales is accomplished.

#### 505.3.2 Advertising For Bids

After field work is completed and necessary reports prepared for DNR approval, the administrator shall prepare a sale prospectus and make it available to interested loggers. Timber sale advertisements, at a minimum, will be by classified ad in a newspaper having general circulation in the county (s. 28.11(6)(b), Wis. Stats). Ads shall be run once each week for two consecutive weeks, the last being at least one week prior to the bid opening. A longer advance time will be given when feasible. Bid sales will generally be offered in early spring and fall, or as needed.

#### 505.3.3 Prospectus

The following information will be made available to prospective bidders:

- (1) Species to be harvested and estimated volume
- (2) Minimum acceptable bid
- (3) Maps of sale areas
- (4) Special contract provisions
- (5) Procedures for bidding
- (6) Bid forms

(7) Timber sales bond and advance stumpage schedule

505.3.4 Method Of Bidding

Bids will be reviewed at a meeting of the committee. A sealed envelope showing tract number and marked "sealed bid" shall be submitted on County Forest bid forms by the bidder for each tract bid on, and shall contain:

- (1) The bid price per cord or per thousand board feet for each species offered and the total for each species bid. The total value of the timber sale bid shall be indicated on both scaled and lump sum bids. The total bid value must meet or exceed the advertised sale minimum.
- (2) A minimum of 10% of the bid value of each tract must accompany the bid as a bid bond, payable to Forest County.

505.3.5 Awarding Sales

- (1) The high bidder is normally awarded the sale contract; however, the committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and accept the bid offer most advantageous to the county. Grounds for rejecting bids may include without limit:

- (a) Non-compliance with County Forest contract requirements.
- (b) Delinquent financial obligations.
- (c) Unsatisfactory past performances.
- (d) Inability to demonstrate financial or professional capability.

Evaluation criteria on timber sales will be price and documented ability to satisfactorily complete the contract. Factors to be assessed may include proposed equipment and operation, references, proof of financial stability, past performance and documented training completed. Forest County requires appropriate training of logging contractors. The award of contract to the successful bidder shall be based upon the bid determined most advantageous to the County.

- (2) Tie bids shall be settled by toss of a coin.

- (3) Sales remaining unsold after being advertised for two bid openings may be sold direct at not less than the appraised value even though their estimated value exceeds \$3,000. (See DNR Timber Sales Handbook No. 2461 - Chapter 52).

#### 505.3.6 Sales Contracts

- (1) Contracts will be prepared with copies provided to the logger and the DNR with the original filed in the administrator's office.
- (2) Contracts are to be signed by the successful bidder within 15 days of the sale or before cutting begins, whichever occurs first, with payment being made according to the County Timber Sale Bond and Advance Stumpage Payment Schedule. Failure to sign the contract within 15 days may result in forfeiture of bid bond.

#### 505.3.7 Timber Sale Performance Bond

- (1) Surety bonds or an irrevocable letter of credit issued by a bank which is a member of the Federal Reserve System or insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation may be used in lieu of cash as a performance bond on sales. The letter of credit or surety bond must be in effect for a period of time equal to the term of the contract, plus a sufficient time to allow for possible extension(s) and for closeout of the contract after cutting is completed.
- (2) The bid bond may be transferred to the performance bond.

#### 505.3.8 Contract Provisions

All timber sale contracts will be on the form approved by the committee and all provisions therein shall apply. A copy of the timber sale map will be attached and become a part of the contract.

##### 505.3.8(a) Slash Disposal, Landings and Decking

The objective is to control conditions that affect the following:

Fire, insects, disease, aesthetics, regeneration, wetlands, wildlife and public interest. Each timber sale contract will have specific slash disposal instructions and aesthetic safeguards and will include without limit the following:

- (a) All slash must be reduced to a maximum specified height: no trees, tops or limbs shall be leaning or hanging in standing timber.
- (b) No machinery may be operated in lakes or streams.
- (c) No slash may be deposited in lakes or streams pursuant to s. 26.12(6), Wis. Stats.
- (d) No slash, logging debris or machinery operation outside the sale boundary unless approved by the County.
- (e) Landings and decks are not allowed within 100 feet of any public road except by proper authorization from the County.
- (f) Any debris or material not natural to the land shall be properly disposed of as it is generated.
- (g) All slash disposal, road or landing areas, and other woods operations shall be conducted in compliance with state regulations and local shoreland and wetland zoning restrictions.

#### 505.3.8(b) Duration and Extension Of Contracts

- (a) All contracts will be issued for not less than six months nor more than 2 years, unless otherwise stated on advertisement and/or contracts. Contracts will be dated to expire on the anniversary of the sale. Exceptions may be made in cases of extenuating circumstances.
- (b) A one year contract extension, if deemed necessary by the Seller, may be granted to the purchaser with a 15% increase in stumpage prices.
- (c) The maximum time duration of a timber sale contract, including extensions, shall be 4 years. Extension beyond this period of time shall be considered by the committee only in the event of special justification. Special stumpage rate adjustments may be made.

- (d) If purchasers do not wish to have contracts renewed or extended, double stumpage may be charged for any timber left on the sale area.
- (e) The contractor may request a contract release due to severe physical or financial disability. The committee shall determine whether or not a release shall be granted and may withhold all or a portion of the bond deposit for damages.

505.3.8(c) Contract Violations

Field enforcement of timber sale contracts will be the responsibility of the administrator employing the following procedure:

- (a) The administrator, or designee, will attempt to resolve inadvertent or minor violations by verbal contact with the contractor.
- (b) The administrator, or designee, may immediately suspend logging operations when a serious or emergency situation arises.
- (c) The suspension will be followed by written notice to the contractor, stating the nature of the violation and informing them of committee action taken or pending.
- (d) The Committee, in consultation with legal counsel, may consider, but is not limited to the following remedies:
  - (1) Charge double stumpage
  - (2) Charge for actual damages
  - (3) Suspend contract
  - (4) Retain all deposits
  - (5) Foreclose on cut forest products on sale
  - (6) Refer to District Attorney for prosecution
  - (7) Seek civil damages in addition to the performance bond.
- (e) Suspension of operation will remain in effect until receipt of written notice from the county.
- (f) Failure of the contractor to comply with the committee decision may result in the contractor becoming a non-qualifying and ineligible bidder



in the future. At the committee's discretion, the contractor may be banned from future purchase of county timber sales for a period of 3 years. All deposits may be retained and forest products on sale areas may be seized and sold by the county.

#### 505.3.9 Timber Sale Restrictions

- (1) To minimize resource damage, the types of logging equipment, methods, and times of operation used on sale areas will be restricted by the county.
- (2) Special restrictions may be required in accordance with the aesthetic policy set forth in Section 520.
- (3) Seasonal restrictions may be applied to protect roads, minimize recreation use conflicts, benefit wildlife management, avoid endangered resources concerns, minimize insect and disease problems, or to assist in fire protection.

#### 505.3.10 Special Forest Product Contracts

Stumpage of fuelwood, Christmas trees, boughs, posts and poles and other special forest products for resale will be handled as a regular timber sale.

#### 505.3.11 Timber Sale Roads

- (1) The contractor will be responsible for securing legal access to sale areas across private or other non-county ownership.
- (2) The contractor will be responsible for securing permission to conduct logging activities within town, county or state road rights-of-way (e.g. decking, skidding)
- (3) Forestry personnel will approve the lay-out of all roads and make other necessary special provisions within the sale contract.
- (4) Skidding, decking, or other logging activity is not allowed on County Forest roads or ditches unless approved by the County Forest administrator. These areas will be kept free from logging debris. County forest access roads will be maintained by the logger and be left in good as

original condition at the close of the sale. Roads will be inspected by county personnel to insure minimal resource damage.

- (5) A timber sale purchaser may request permission to gate a timber sale access road. The administrator may grant a gate permit to prohibit only motorized traffic.

#### 505.3.12 Supervising Sales

Sale inspections will be performed periodically by county and / or state personnel with corresponding notations in the sales record.

#### 505.3.13 Forest Products Accountability

##### 505.3.13(a) Scaling Merchantability

- (1) Sawlogs will be scaled by the Scribner Decimal C. log rule. A log is defined as: A log is defined as 9" diameter inside bark (d.i.b.) and 8' in length for softwood and 10" (d.i.b.) small end and 8' in length for hardwood and scales at least 30 board feet.
- (2) The standard unit of measure for cordwood is measuring 4' x 4' x 8' of unpeeled wood. Peeled wood will be converted to the standard cord by adding 12.5% for sap-peeled and adding 25% for machine-peeled wood to the gross volume measured. A pulpwood tree contains at least one (1) 8' stick, to a minimum top diameter as defined in the contract.
- (3) The standard unit of measure for sawbolts is reasonably straight and sound, free of excessive knots, a minimum of 100 inches long with a minimum top diameter of eight inches and not capable of meeting the sawlog specifications.
- (4) DNR Timber Sale handbook #2461 will be used as a guide in determining the conversion rates for posts, poles, bolts, chips, weight-scaled wood or other types of forest products.

505.3.13(b) Utilization Standards

Utilization standards will be specified on individual contracts to provide maximum utilization of all merchantable timber and will be based on the scaling standards in 505.3.13(a).

505.3.13(c) Methods of Accountability

Wood harvested from the sale area must be accounted for and payment made in accordance with existing policy and procedure. One or more of the following may be used on an individual sale:

- (1) The ticket system utilizes serialized three-part tickets that must be paid for in advance, based on the approximate stumpage value of the wood to be hauled. One ticket must accompany each load of wood to the mill. Mill scale will be accepted for volume determination.
- (2) Wood may also be scaled on the landing. This method is generally used for sawlogs. Payment for wood products scaled is normally due within 30 days of billing
- (3) Lump sum sales may be utilized and divided into cutting units when practical. Payment for a cutting unit must be received in full before any cutting begins in that unit.

505.3.14 Special Forest Product Permits

- (1) A written permit for making fuelwood for personal use must be purchased for a specific area designated on the permit.
- (2) A written permit for cutting boughs for personal use will be issued for a specific area designated in the permit. Bough payment rate will be set by the Forestry committee.
- (3) Written permits may be issued for special forest products for community or personal use, with fees established by the Forestry committee.

- (4) An annual summary report of cut products sold by permit will be filed with the DNR using Timber Sale Notice and Cutting Report (Form 2460 – 1).

#### 505.4 NATURAL REGENERATION

Where feasible, natural regeneration will be encouraged through the use of silvicultural methods or cultural activities including, but not limited to, clearcuts, shelterwood cuts, strip cuts, scarification, prescribed burning, select cuts and seed tree cuts. These practices can be enhanced by additional treatments, including the cutting of non-merchantable trees following harvest, by scarification before or after cutting for natural seeding, by prescribed burning, and by chemical treatment. These treatments can be used alone or in combination, depending on the needs of the site. The Silvicultural & Aesthetics Hbk. (DNR Hbk. #2431.5) shall be used as a reference in determining timing, techniques and adequacy of both natural and artificial regeneration.

##### 505.4.1 Removal Of Non-Merchantable Residual Trees

To meet certain silvicultural objectives, the cutting of non-merchantable residual trees may be required as part of a timber sale contract. This requirement will normally be included in the contract when stand evaluation indicates that the density of non-merchantable trees following harvest is likely to inhibit the growth of desirable shade intolerant tree species. Non-merchantable residual tree removal may be also done by post-sale contractor by County crews if it cannot be done as part of the timber sale contract, and if funding and a labor source is available.

##### 505.4.2 Prescribed Burning For Natural Regeneration

Fire is one of the most natural means available to stimulate the regrowth of early successional species. It should be employed as a management tool when possible and practical. Prescribed burning for purposes such as site preparation, slash removal, or replacement of natural fire ecology will be conducted when conditions

allow. DNR Fire Control will be the major source of guidance and direction. See DNR Fire Presuppression handbook (4360.5).

#### 505.4.3 Other

Site preparation by other means may be considered where natural regeneration will be aided by treatment methods.

### 505.5 ARTIFICIAL REGENERATION

When natural tree regeneration fails, or when tree species present do not coincide with management objectives for the site, then artificial means shall be employed to establish a more appropriate stand of trees. The establishment of a forest stand through artificial means usually requires some sort of preparation of the site, followed by seeding or planting.

#### 505.5.1 Mechanical Site Preparation

Mechanical site preparation includes the use of soil disturbance equipment such as a disc, roller chopper, patch scarifier, disk trencher and V-plow prior to tree planting or seeding. This type of equipment is used to reduce logging debris to a smaller size, to incorporate debris into the soil, to clear brush and debris from the site to facilitate planting or seeding, and to reduce competition from other vegetation.

#### 505.5.2 Chemical Site Preparation

Herbicide application can be an effective means of controlling unwanted vegetation in order to establish seedlings or plantations. It should be used sparingly, in situations where mechanical treatment is not expected to provide the level of vegetative control needed. Chemicals will be selected and applied in strict accordance with label recommendations and requirements. The objective of herbicide use is not to kill all competing vegetation, but rather to kill or set back competing vegetation only enough to establish a reasonable stocked stand of desirable trees. Proximity to private lands, residences, highways and other public

use areas must be considered in selecting both the herbicide and the means of application. Herbicides can be applied with hand- held equipment, by motorized ground based equipment or aircraft. A written prescription for each herbicide application will be prepared, kept on file, and be made available to the primary applicator.

#### 505.5.3 Prescribed Burning

Prescribed burning for site preparation can be used to reduce logging debris, clear the site, kill set back unwanted vegetation, and to release nutrients into the soil. DNR Fire Control staff will be the major source of guidance and direction for the use of fire as a tool. See DNR Fire Presuppression Handbook (4360.5).

#### 505.5.4 Tree Planting / Seeding

Both machine and/or hand planting/seeding will be utilized to insure adequate regeneration. The selection of species will be determined according to the specific management objectives and capabilities of each site. It shall be the policy of the committee to maintain existing forest openings and manage them for wildlife habitat rather than to plant trees in them. The majority of planting/seeding will be in harvested areas where natural regeneration is inadequate. Planting/seeding may also be employed to maintain a desirable species distribution on the forest for purposes such as aesthetics, biodiversity, and wildlife.

### 505.6 TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENT.

Timber stand improvement will involve release, thinning, and pruning as the primary practices during this plan period. Timber stand improvement includes any practices that increase the health, growth and quality of existing stands of trees. It can include activities such as release of desirable trees from vegetative competition, non-commercial thinnings of dense tree stands and pruning of lower tree branches. Some practices can be done either by hand, mechanically, or chemically. All practices and applications may be employed during this plan period.

505.6.1 Release

Release work, if it cannot be done by commercial timber harvest, will be conducted by either mechanical or chemical means as site or environmental conditions warrant. Release is defined as the removal of competing vegetation from the desire tree species.

505.6.2 Non-Commercial Thinning

Most thinning can be accomplished through commercial harvest operations. Non-commercial thinning will be considered if the individual site requirements, funding and/or available labor make it desirable.

505.6.3 Pruning

Pruning will be considered mainly for conifer species and carried out when deemed economically feasible.

510

**RECREATION**

The County Forest Ordinance and s. 28.11, Wis.Stats. authorize the Forestry Committee to provide recreational opportunities for the public. This authority is further recognized in the mission statement for the Forest County Forest (Chapter100) that specifically identifies outdoor recreation opportunities. The mission statement also charges the Committee to conduct activities in a manner that prevents or minimizes the degradation of natural resources.

- (1) The Committee may establish and maintain recreation areas and facilities within the County Forest. The Committee has been empowered to establish and enforce rules and regulations for the use of such developments and to establish fees for their use.
- (2) The County Outdoor Recreation Plan, updated approximately every five years, will reflect the public use and interest in the county's recreation facilities and how the county plans to accommodate those uses and interests.

- (3) The Forest County codes and ordinances shall govern the lands designated by the county for park or recreational purposes.
- (4) The county recreation map and the ordinances are appended in Chapter 900.

510.1 RECREATIONAL SERVICE AGREEMENTS

It is permissible for the Committee to contract with clubs or individuals to provide recreational services for the public. An agreement with a local ATV club to assist in grading and maintaining county ATV trail facilities is an example.

510.2 RECREATIONAL USE PERMITS.

- (1) Permits or use agreements for use of the County Forest may be issued by the Committee for recreational purposes.
- (2) No permits for sale of malt or intoxicating beverages will be issued on the County Forest.
- (3) Other types of special use permits are found in Section 515.
- (4) Permits will not be issued for cabin sites on the forest.
- (5) Organized events or special uses, other than informal recreation (see Sec. 510.4) require specific permission from the Committee.

510.3 ENTRANCE AND USER FEES

- (1) Fees for camping shall be in accord with fees charged by similar private facilities so as not to provide undue competition. Fees shall be subject to change periodically at the discretion of the Committee.
- (2) Detailed information on park or recreation area use regulations can be found in the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Ordinance.

510.4 EXTENSIVE RECREATIONAL USE OF THE FOREST

Extensive (informal) County Forest uses shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, hunting, fishing, picnicking, snowshoeing, biking, hiking, cross-



country skiing, photography and nature study. Such uses do not require a permit but must be conducted according to the provisions of County Ordinances.

#### 510.4.1 Hunting

The entire county forest is open for regulated hunting with the exception of designated areas that are developed for high public use, such as Veterans Memorial Park. Temporary hunting stands are permissible but must be removed from the forest after use. In addition, elevated stands must be removed at days end. The use of nails, lag screws, screw steps, or other damaging devices is not permitted. No permanent type structures shall be permitted. Refer to Chapter 900 for the ordinance pertaining to tree stands.

#### 510.4.2 Fishing

All lakes and streams within the forest are available for regulated fishing, unless otherwise listed in state and county regulations.

#### 510.4.3 Picnicking

Picnicking is allowed throughout the County Forest; however, the user must remove any garbage or debris generated. Violators will be subject to fines for littering.

#### 510.4.4 Camping

A permit is required to camp outside of developed campgrounds on the County Forest.

- (1) No littering or site destruction will be tolerated.
- (2) The Forestry Committee will set the permit fee.
- (3) Maximum permit period is 14 days.
- (4) Natural vegetation and terrain may not be damaged or altered in any way, except for the construction of an adequate fire ring. Fasteners such as nails, screws or bolts may not be attached to trees.
- (5) Manufactured materials (lumber, concrete, plastics, etc.) may not be left on

the site when it is vacated. No trees or other vegetation, either native or exotic, may be planted on the site.

## 510.5 INTENSIVE RECREATION AREAS.

### 510.5.1 Campgrounds

Designated camping areas are provided on the County Forest. These facilities include:

- (1) Veterans Memorial Park

### 510.5.2 Picnic Areas

Picnic areas open to the public include:

- (1) Veterans Memorial Park
- (2) Forest County ATV trail
- (3) Otter Springs Skiing and hiking trail

### 510.5.3 Swimming Areas

Designated swimming areas include:

- (1) Veterans Memorial Park

Lifeguards are not provided at these areas.

### 510.5.4 Boat Landings

At several locations in the county, on and off the County Forest, areas have been developed for water access. These generally include a parking lot, surfaced approach to the water (boat landing), and appropriate signing. These are provided for public access to waters for recreational purposes and are shown on the recreation map in Chapter 900. Water access is also addressed in Chapter 700. These landings are not to be considered boat-mooring sites. The only formal County owned boat landing is Veteran's Memorial Park.

#### 510.5.5 Waysides

Waysides are day use areas and are located at various points throughout the County. They are shown on the Recreation map found in Chapter 900.

#### 510.5.6 Shooting Ranges

Ranges that allow for public use of rifle, bow, pistol, etc. are permitted on County Forest lands. If the range is operated by an organization other than the county, a written land use agreement, including proof of insurance, will be required. A provision for use by the public will be included in the agreement.

### 510.6 MANAGED TRAIL AREAS

Whenever possible, multiple uses of the various trail systems are encouraged and are subject to policy review of the Committee. Whenever possible, user conflicts are avoided. However, recreational users will frequently encounter forest management activities instrumental to the existence and future of the Forest County Forest. The trail systems are identified in the Recreation map appended in Chapter 900 and referenced in Chapter 700.

#### 510.6.1 Motorized Trail Opportunities

The Forest County Forest is a multiple use forest. Motorized travel on trails can be a legitimate use of this forest provided that these trails are designed and maintained in a manner that minimizes damage to the environment and reduces user conflict. Trail use and development must be compatible and sustainable with the characteristics of the landscape. It shall be the policy of the Forestry Committee to consider opportunities for the following motorized trail use:

- 1) Snowmobiles
- 2) All terrain vehicles (ATV's)

Refer to Chapter 700 for further discussion on motorized recreation opportunities on the Forest County Forest.

#### 510.6.2 Non-Motorized Trail Opportunities

The Forest County Forest is a multiple-use forest. Non-motorized travel on trails is a legitimate use of this forest. Design and maintenance of these trails may highlight natural features present on the Forest, should minimize damage to the environment and reduce user conflict. Trail use and development must be compatible and sustainable with the characteristics of the landscape. It shall be the policy of the Committee to consider opportunities for the following non-motorized trail use:

- 1) Ski trails
- 2) Hiking trails
- 3) Horse trails
- 4) Biking trails
- 5) Other trails

Refer to Chapter 700 for further discussion on non-motorized recreation opportunities on the Forest County Forest.

#### 510.7 RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Forest County will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations. In addition, it is the policy of the Committee to provide recreational opportunities for people with disabilities.

#### 515 SPECIAL USES

(1) Recognizing the vast potential for a variety of special uses of the County Forest by governmental units, businesses, organizations or individuals, the committee may designate specified areas for special uses. Specific management

methods are to be considered on these areas. Uses must be consistent with the intent of the County Forest Law.

(2) All requests for specialized uses of any County Forest lands will require a permit authorized by the Committee.

(3) A list of existing special use areas is appended in Chapter 900.

#### 515.1

#### SAND AND GRAVEL

Sand and gravel pits located on the County Forest may be used only by units of government or contractors performing public works. Use of existing pits and the opening of new pits by other than the County Forestry Department will require Committee approval and be authorized by permit only. The condition of such permits may include but not be limited to:

- 1) requiring the pit and its access road to be screened from view from any public highway,
- 2) severing trees from the stump,
- 3) disposition of brush and dirt spoil by leveling or hauling away,
- 4) sloping to prevent steep banks, and
- 5) filing with the forestry office an annual written report of gravel and sand removed.

Other conditions may be set at the discretion of the Committee or County Forest Administrator. The Committee may set fees for materials removed. Other non-metalliferous materials will be dealt with on an individual basis.

All active, nonmetallic sites greater than one acre in size, including those on the County Forest, are also subject to the provisions of the Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Program, Chapter NR 135, Wis. Adm. Code. The County Forestry Department shall work with the local permit coordinator (often county or local zoning office) in obtaining the necessary permits for nonmetallic mining operations.

Sand and gravel may, under some circumstances, be leased to private contractors for private use. In these situations the land must be withdrawn from the County Forest Law until sand/gravel removal and reclamation of the site is completed.

Upon completion of reclamation to the satisfaction of the county and the state, the lands shall be reapplied for entry under the County Forest Law.

515.2 EXPLORATION, PROSPECTING AND MINING

(1) The committee may investigate all mineral exploration, prospecting and mining requests as they are received.

(2) The DNR shall be notified of all requests as they become known in accord with Manual Code 2712.1. (Mineral exploration on County Forests per s.s. 28.11

(3)(i) Wis. Stats.) or other codes which may be subsequently adopted.

Public Forest Lands Handbook should be referenced for more detailed procedure.

515.3 SANITARY LANDFILLS.

The use of County Forest lands for sanitary landfills will not be allowed unless the lands involved are withdrawn from the County Forest Law.

515.4 MILITARY MANEUVERS

Military maneuvers on County Forest lands will be considered under a lease or written land use agreement. Upon receipt of a written request from the military the Committee, other necessary County staff, Military, and D.N.R. representatives will discuss the issue at a public Committee meeting. After the needs have been outlined, the site shall be field checked, D.N.R. input and consistency with the County Forest Law sought, and town officials advised. Depending on the scope of the project, a public hearing may be appropriate. If all aspects and concerns are addressed and agreed to, a legal instrument will be drafted. The matter will then be brought back to a Committee meeting for final input and approval. The Public Forest Lands Handbook #2460.5, Chapter 270 will be used for further direction in this matter.

515.5 PUBLIC UTILITIES.

Easements for public utilities will be considered by the Committee. Underground installations will be encouraged. The following main provisions shall be included

in any County Board resolution granting permission for construction of any utility transmission line:

1. Utility may be billed for merchantable forest products and existing timber reproduction.
2. Utility may be billed for land removed from production due to right-of-way clearing for losses of future income and multiple use benefits.
3. Land removed for utility operations that is no longer suited “primarily for timber production or, that is no longer suitable for scenic, outdoor recreation, public hunting & fishing, water conservation or multiple use purposes” (s. 28.11(4)(c) WI.Stats) may need to be withdrawn from county forest law designation. The utility shall replace any lands requiring withdrawal from county forest with other lands suitable for county forest entry that are in the forest blocking of the County Forest.
4. Utility companies will be encouraged to use existing corridors and underground lines to minimize disturbance to the county forest and native plants and animals.
5. Merchantable timber will be removed in a manner approved by the Committee. Timber cut must be reported to the D.N.R on form 2460-1.
6. Utility must provide notice of proposed route, including a map of not less than 1 inch /mile scale, 90 days in advance of proposed construction.
7. Special maintenance, controlled access and signage concerns shall be addressed in any proposal.
8. An appropriate fee shall be charged for easements.

#### 515.6 PRIVATE UTILITY SERVICE LINES

If a landowner cannot gain utility access across other lands, the committee may consider a land use agreement for access across County Forest. Requests will be considered on a case by case basis. These agreements should consider the inclusions mentioned in Section 515 for easements as well as:

1. The permit is non-transferable
2. The County retains full ownership of the utility corridor, however it shall

not be liable for maintenance, upkeep, or other damages associated with the utility service.

3. The permittee waives any rights to any declaration of ownership or interest in the utility corridor on County land for administrative costs as a result of this Land Use Agreement – Utility permit. This agreement is granted upon the signature and any fees being received by Forest County.
4. The fee for such a land use agreement will be set by the Forest County Forestry Committee.
5. The standard land use agreement for utility access is included as an exhibit in Chapter 900.

#### 515.7

#### CELLULAR COMMUNICATION TOWERS

The siting of cellular communication towers on the Forest County Forest will be considered by the Committee on a limited basis. Requests will be considered on a case by case basis subject to the following conditions:

1. It must be demonstrated that the site is the most practical location for such a tower.
2. Land selected for such a tower is no longer suitable for continued entry in the County Forest program. In addition, any accompanying lands needed for tower support wires that inhibit the practice of forestry and are no longer suitable for scenic, outdoor recreation, public hunting & fishing, water conservation or multiple use purposes (s. 28.11(4), Wis.Stats) may also need to be withdrawn from county forest law. Withdrawal is subject to approval by both County Board and DNR. The cellular communication company shall replace any lands requiring withdrawal from county forest with other lands suitable for county forest entry that are in the forest blocking.
3. Any agreement should also consider the inclusions listed under 515.5 (Items 1-7).



515.8

**OTHER**

Other types of special uses of the county forest may be considered by the committee. These may include, but are not limited to: research, independent study and scientific areas. Regulations governing these uses will be developed on an individual basis.

**520**

**AESTHETIC MANAGEMENT ZONES**

Aesthetic forest management will be applied to the County Forest. The degree of application of special management will vary and will require the classification of the forest according to the degree and type of public use. The Wisconsin DNR Silvicultural and Forest Aesthetics Handbook No. 2431.5, and the Natural Resources Board Policy on management of State and County Forests contained in Chapter NR 1.24 of the Wis. Administrative Code (as adopted in June of 1989) will be used for management prescription guidelines. Subsequent versions of NR1.24 are subject to the approval of the County. Scenic Management Zones are shown on the land use map appended to in Chapter 900.14.

520.1

**AESTHETIC MANAGEMENT ZONE A**

Zone A includes areas where there is intensive public presence because of scenic attraction, or some use of the area that would be enhanced by special timber management practices.

**520.1.1 Examples – Zone A**

- (1) Park and recreation areas, including access routes.
- (2) Lakes and rivers that support significant water based recreational activity.
- (3) Roads with medium to heavy use where the majority of the traffic is unrelated to the forest or is for the specific purpose of enjoying scenery.

#### 520.1.2 Boundaries – Zone A

1. Park or recreation areas. Zone boundaries may include the area within the reasonable visible horizon as determined from any location within the recreation area. It may also include adjacent areas that receive a considerable amount of use as a result of the recreation area.
2. Travel corridors. The boundaries will be a reasonable distance from the traveled part of the zone.

#### 520.1.3 Management – Zone A

Zone A management is primarily for scenic values. This will mainly involve adaptations of normal timber cutting practices and may require additional expenditures.

#### 520.1.4 Permitted Uses – Zone A

1. Timber harvesting and thinning operations may be prohibited during periods of peak public use. All slash may be lopped and/or removed from view.
2. Timber stands in this zone will be managed to afford the greatest scenic potential for public enjoyment.
3. Borrow pits may be permitted near a road during the time the road is under construction. When any borrow operation is completed the site will be restored pursuant to Chapter NR 135, Wis. Adm. Code and must aesthetically conform to general use of the area. Permanent pits should be screened from view. Gravel / borrow pits located on the county forest may only be used by units of government or contractors performing public works.
4. County directional, informational and recreational signs conforming to approved standards are permitted.
5. All tree and shrub planting will be spaced at random to prevent an artificial appearance.

6. New access roads will be permitted if they join the main road at right angles... All such access roads will be, when possible, curved so that no cleared line of sight will be created from the main road to the exterior boundary of the zone.

## 520.2 AESTHETIC MANAGEMENT ZONE B

Zone B includes any area of the forest where the public use is such that no one value can at all times be considered as the most important, but where, because of the intensity and variety of use, scenic attractiveness is desirable.

### 520.2.1 Examples – Zone B

1. Roads with light to medium use where the majority of the traffic is a result of some other use of the forest other than for scenic beauty.
2. Lakes or streams that do not have significant value for water-based recreation.

### 520.2.2 Boundaries – Zone B

The zone boundaries will have a reasonable visual horizon determined at periods of heavy use, from the part of the zone where the use occurs.

### 520.2.3 Management – Zone B

Zone B Management is for normal multiple use, but applies strict slash disposal requirements for any management operations. With the use of informational signs, management practices may be interpreted to the public.

### 520.2.4 Permitted Uses – Zone B

All land management activities are permissible but should be exercised with sensitivity to aesthetics. Examples: Timber sales may employ lopping and scattering of slash, rehabilitation of roads and landings, erosion control and prevention, and irregular harvest lines to mitigate aesthetic impact.

520.3 AESTHETIC MANAGEMENT ZONE C

Zone C includes all parts of the forest not contained in Zones A, B or D. Any significant public presence in this zone is likely to occur only as result of a specific use of the forest.

520.3.1 Examples – Zone C

All areas not included in Zone A, B or D. The majority of the forest is normally classified as Zone C.

520.3.2 Boundaries – Zone C

All areas not included in Zone A, B or D.

520.3.3 Management – Zone C

Zone C management is to optimize timber production using sound resource management concepts. Natural opportunities to maintain or enhance diversity or scenic quality should be considered.

520.3.4 Permitted Uses – Zone C

All land management activities consistent with the goals of the forest.

520.4 AESTHETIC MANAGEMENT ZONE D

Areas designated as special resources.

520.4.1 Examples – Zone D

(1) No examples currently on Forest County Forest.

520.4.2 Management – Zone D

Manage these areas as outlined in Chapter 800 or the individual management plan.

**525 TREATY RIGHTS: GATHERING MISCELLANEOUS  
FOREST PRODUCTS**

Ordinance No. 02-92, adopted by the County Board of Supervisors of the County of Forest on February 18, 1992 , authorizes Forest County to require permits for gathering miscellaneous forest products on County land by Native American treaty rights participants. The ordinance, of the General Code of Forest County, adopts language of, and complies with, the Federal District Court decision and states as follows:

- (1) Any treaty rights participant interested in gathering firewood, tree bark, maple sap, lodge poles, boughs, marsh hay or other miscellaneous forest products (except fruits, seeds, or berries not enumerated in County ordinances) from County land shall obtain a County gathering permit from the County forestry office. The County shall respond to the gathering permit request no later than 14 days after receipt of the request. The gathering permit shall indicate the location of the material to be gathered, the volume of material to be gathered, and conditions of the gathering of the material necessary for conservation of the timber and miscellaneous forest products on the County land, or for public health or safety.
- (2) The County may not deny a request to gather miscellaneous forest products on county property under this section unless: (a) the gathering is inconsistent with the management plan for the property, (b) the gathering will conflict with the pre-existing rights of a permittee or other person possessing an approval to conduct an activity on the property, including a contractor of the county or, (c) is otherwise inconsistent with conservation or public health or safety. Subchapter IV, Ch.NR13, WI. Adm.Code details the regulations.

**530 HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS / AREAS (HCVF) and  
EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCES**

High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) is a term that identifies those areas possessing unique qualities locally, regionally, or nationally. Forest County's focus in managing these areas will be to maintain or enhance the qualities that

make these areas special. In some instances this may involve altering management practices to mitigate impacts and in others it may entail no active management. HCVF's on the Forest County Forest include the following. Management implications associated with these designations are included in section 850 of this Plan.

530.1 AREAS HIGH IN LOCALLY, REGIONALLY OR NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT BIODIVERSITY VALUES

530.1.1 Wisconsin State Natural Areas

No Wisconsin State Natural Areas are present on the Forest County Forest at this time.

530.1.2 Species Concentration Areas

No Species Concentration Areas are present on the Forest County Forest at this time

530.1.3 Other

530.2 RARE, THREATENED, OR ENDANGERED ECOSYSTEMS

530.2.1 Relic Old Growth stands: None

530.2.2 Old Growth: None

530.2.3 Savannas including oak openings & oak barrens: None

530.2.4 Natural origin pine relics: None

530.2.5 Pine barrens: None

530.2.6 Geological Features of Significance: None

530.2.7 Eastern Hemlock stands: Gumms Bog

530.2.8 Habitat for Species Identified as Rare, Threatened, Endangered, or  
Greatest Conservation Need: None identified

530.2.9 Rare & Geographically Restricted Natural Communities:  
None identified

530.3 CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT SITES

Burial Mounds / Cemeteries None identified.

530.3.1 Logging camps

530.3.2 Landmarks None.

530.3.3 Otter Creek Spring House (CCC Camp)

530.4 LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT SITES

530.4.1 It is the policy of Forest County to manage these type resources to enhance and protect their individual exceptional features. A review of the State Historical Society database will be conducted on all timber sales.

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**CHAPTER 600**

**PROTECTION**

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**600 PROTECTION**

**OBJECTIVE**

To protect and manage the resources of the forest from preventable losses resulting from fire, insects, diseases and other destructive elements including those caused by people. Protective methods shall include proper silvicultural methods.

**605 FIRE CONTROL**

Damage to the forest caused by uncontrolled fire can create an important challenge in the management of the forest. Loss of resource values caused by fire will be minimized through organized prevention, detection and suppression methods. Maintaining a healthy forest is key to fire management. The DNR is responsible for all matters relating to the prevention, detection and suppression of forest fires outside the limits of incorporated villages and cities. (s.26.11(1), Wis.Stats). The DNR works cooperatively with local fire departments in all fire control efforts. Forest County Forest is part of the intensive Forest Fire protection area. The Fire Prevention Handbook No. 4310.5, Fire Presuppression Handbook No. 4320.5, the Fire Management Handbook No. 4325.1 and the Area Fire Plan shall serve as the guidelines for fire control activities.

**605.1 COOPERATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Pursuant to s. 26.11(4) and s. 28.11(4)(f), Wis. Stats., and of the Forest County Forest Ordinance, the county may cooperate with the DNR in the interest of fire prevention, detection and suppression on the County Forest. This is accomplished through agreements authorizing the DNR to use County Forest land or to utilize county personnel and equipment for fire protection activities.

**605.1.1 Personnel**

County Forest personnel, upon request from the DNR, shall be made available for forest fire control efforts within the county in accordance with an established memorandum of understanding (MOU). The DNR is responsible for training and directing the activities of county personnel in accordance with the rules identified in the Area Fire Action Plan.

#### 605.1.2 Equipment

County Forest equipment, upon request and as identified in the MOU, shall be available for forest fire control suppression. During periods of high fire hazard, all County Forest vehicles and/or crews should be equipped with one or more back pack cans, axes or shovels, appropriate personal protective equipment, mobile communication and any other equipment deemed essential by the MOU. All hand tools shall be maintained and provided by the DNR.

#### 605.1.3 Fire Detection

Fire detection is the responsibility of the DNR. County Forestry personnel shall assist and report any wild fires to the DNR or 911 Dispatch.

#### 605.1.4 Forest Fire Prevention

DNR fire control personnel are authorized by the county to place fire prevention signs at recreational areas and other strategic locations within the forest. The County conducts and controls all operations (including harvesting) on the forest in a manner designed to prevent forest fires. The use of the county forest during high fire danger periods may be restricted. These restrictions will include, but not be limited to, recreation and logging.

#### 605.2 SLASH DISPOSAL

Timber sale contracts will be designed to meet or exceed the requirements of the Slash Disposal Law, s. 26.12, Wis. Stats. Additional requirements may be imposed as necessary.

#### 605.3 DEBRIS BURNING

Unauthorized burning of debris will not be permitted on County Forest Lands pursuant to s. 26.12(5), Wis. Stats.

#### 605.4 CAMP FIRES

Adequate fireplaces will be provided at designated recreation sites. During periods of high fire danger, use of camp fires may be restricted.

#### 605.5 PRESCRIBED BURNING

All prescribed burning on County Forest lands will follow the DNR recommendations. See Prescribed Burn Handbook No. 4360.5 for details. Prescribed fire may be an effective management tool on the County Forest.

#### 605.6 COUNTY FOREST FIRE HAZARD AREAS

Primary emphasis will be placed on fire control efforts in pine areas. Maps of these areas are available at the local DNR field office (Fire Management Hbk. #4325.1, Section 3030). The County will cooperate with DNR Fire Control in providing for firebreaks or access ways in new Existing access roads, firebreaks and water access points will be maintained as deemed necessary. Secondary emphasis will be placed on hardwood areas with no firebreaks developed or maintained. However, access roads will be maintained as defined in Chapter 700 of this plan.

#### 605.7 UNCONTROLLED FIRE

Any uncontrolled or non-prescribed fires on the County Forest will be suppressed as soon as possible by DNR.

### **610 CONTROL OF FOREST PEST & PATHOGEN**

#### 610.1 DETECTION

Damage to the forest caused by insects, other pests and diseases can adversely affect management of the forest resources. Losses to resource values impacted by forest pests will be minimized through integrated pest management methods, with emphasis on silvicultural prescriptions (timber sales). The detection and control of pest problems will be accomplished by county and DNR personnel in cooperation with other agencies.

#### 610.2 PEST SURVEYS

Pest surveys are conducted under the direction of the DNR's regional entomologist. The DNR works in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) in monitoring the spread of gypsy moths. The County may cooperate by providing personnel and equipment to assist in these operations.

### 610.3 INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Integrated pest management for the purpose of this Plan, is defined as follows:

*“The maintenance of destructive agents, including insects, at tolerable levels, by the planned use of a variety of preventive, suppressive, or regulatory tactics and strategies that are ecologically and economically efficient and socially acceptable.”*

The integrated pest management control and methodology shall be determined jointly by the County Forest Administrator and DNR Liaison Forester in consultation with the DNR regional entomologist and regional forester. Suppression of forest pests may include the following:

- 1) Silvicultural prescriptions, including timber sales.
- 2) Biological control.
- 3) Chemical control.

#### 610.3.1 Specific Pests and Pathogens of Interest.

##### Introduced Basswood Thrips

Gypsy Moth

Buckthorn

Emerald ash borer

Garlic mustard

Spotted knapweed

##### 610.3.1.1 Gypsy Moth Strategy

This introduced pest has progressed westward from the northeastern United States since the early 1900's. It reached eastern Wisconsin and has been widespread in some counties since 1988. Despite efforts to slow-the-spread and suppress outbreaks, it is progressing westerly through Wisconsin. The Forest County Forest's strategy to combat this defoliating insect will focus on using silvicultural techniques to maintain and improve forest vigor, so as to decrease the likelihood and severity of defoliation. In addition, suppression spraying with approved insecticides may be considered in high use recreation areas and stands containing a high percentage of susceptible, high valued timber.

Biological controls may also be available for introduction to help reduce outbreak frequency.

The presence or discovery of threatened or endangered species in these areas may impact both the type of treatment and the decision to apply suppression tactics. Current insecticides for gypsy moth control include a bacterial insecticide (Btk) and a commercial formulation of a naturally-occurring virus (Gypchek). The Gypchek virus, specific to gypsy moth larvae, is only available through the federal suppression program administered by the DNR. The intent in combating this insect is not to eradicate, but rather to reduce populations so that tree mortality is maintained at tolerable levels. The DNR's local gypsy moth coordinator and entomologist will be available for consultation on control tactics and possible quarantine procedures. DATCP is the agency responsible for quarantine procedures for wood products from infested counties.

Forest County Forest's threshold levels for suppression will be as follows:

- 20 acres in size and of a compact and regular shape (minimum eligible size for aerial spraying through the state suppression program) OR high use, developed recreation areas
- 500 egg masses per acre based on 1/40<sup>th</sup> acre (18.6 ft. radius) plots
- Located on the Forest County Forest.

#### 610.3.1.4 Forest Tent Caterpillar

Forest tent caterpillar, *Malacosoma disstria* Hubner, can be found throughout the United States and Canada wherever hardwoods grow. The favored hosts in Wisconsin are aspen and oak. This native insect causes region-wide outbreaks at intervals from 10 to 15 years; outbreaks usually last 2 - 5 years in the Lake States. Severe and repeated defoliation can lead to dieback and/or reduced growth of affected trees, which in some instances may be significant. Populations are often controlled by natural enemies, helping the population crash. Aerial spraying of insecticides can be an option for control as well. It will be Forest County's strategy to employ sound silvicultural practices to combat this cyclic pest.

#### 610.3.1.5 Two-lined Chestnut Borer

The two-lined chestnut borer, *Agrilus bilineatus* (Weber), is a common secondary pest in trees which have been severely defoliated several years in a row. Oaks that have been defoliated by insects such as gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*), fall cankerworm (*Alsophila pometaria*), and forest tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma disstria*) can be attacked and killed by the two-lined chestnut borer. Prevention of two-lined chestnut borer is the best management option. Forest County will strive to maintain healthy trees through sound silvicultural practices to discourage infestation. Infestations will be salvaged promptly.

#### 610.3.1.6 Emerald Ash Borer

The emerald ash borer, *Agrilus planipennis*, was introduced from Asia and has taken hold in lower Michigan. In Michigan it has resulted in widespread mortality specific to ash including green, white, black and several horticultural varieties. Although not currently present in Wisconsin, it is a severe threat to ash in the State. Ash comprises a significant component in the northern hardwood timber type and can be found in nearly pure stands in some lowland areas. Adult beetles feed on foliage however, it is the larvae that cause mortality by feeding on the phloem and outer sapwood of the ash trees. Forest County will cooperate with ongoing trapping and survey efforts. Sound silvicultural practices will continue to be used to maintain forest health. Should an infestation occur Forest County will work with DNR Forest Health staff in applying measures to minimize spread, including aggressive salvage trees.

#### 610.3.2 Funding

Desired control activities on the County Forest will be funded through the county forestry budget if other sources of funding are not available. In the event costs require additional funding, special, special appropriations from any available funding source will be sought. In addition, state legislation may provide monetary assistance in direct crisis situations where major control operations are undertaken. In case of gypsy moth outbreaks, the county may seek funding from the State of Wisconsin Gypsy Moth Suppression Program.

610.3.3 Legal Obligations

All control operations will comply with regulations as set forth in existing state and federal legislation. Refer to Wisconsin Administrative Code NR80, AG.-29, and the Environmental Pesticide Control Act.

610.3.4 Special Projects

The County may cooperate with other agencies in forest pest research. See Chapter 200.

**615 TIMBER THEFT**

All cases of alleged timber theft on the county forest shall be investigated and resolved promptly. An allegation of theft by cutting and /or removing timber from the county forest does not alleviate the county from payment under s. 28.11 (9) Wis.Stats. The county will collect damages pursuant to s. 26.05 Wis. Stats. and may also pursue criminal charges under s. 943.20 Wis. Stats. and /or seek civil damages.

**615.1 TIMBER THEFT INVESTIGATION**

The following procedure should be used in all cases of alleged timber theft:

(1) Determination of Theft

(a) Gathering facts - The County, through its sheriff's department and along with assistance of the DNR liaison, rangers and wardens, will ascertain the facts pertinent to the alleged theft, including determination of the damages to the county. Legal counsel representing the county should be involved in all aspects of investigation. Property involved in the alleged theft may be seized pursuant to s. 26.04 Wis. Stats. for use as evidence.

(b) Boundary determination -If property boundaries are involved, they should be established by the county the county shall conduct a legal survey of the boundary in question.

**620 ENCROACHMENTS**

The county will actively investigate all suspected cases of encroachments on the County Forest. To insure the integrity and continuity of the County Forest lands, all cases will be dealt with promptly and in a consistent manner. The following procedures will be used in all cases of suspected encroachments:



- (1) Property lines will be established by the county. The county will establish property boundaries; if necessary, a legal survey will be conducted.
- (2) The county will gather all facts.
- (3) The Committee, in consultation with the forest administrator, county legal counsel, and the DNR, will make a decision as to the disposition of the case.
  - (a) All above ground encroachments that are movable will be removed from county property.
  - (b) Permanent type facilities, such as homes, garages, and septic systems shall be addressed individually and may be removed or handled by a land use agreement. Sale or transfer of the encroachment should remain an option depending on the circumstances involved and the viability of an adverse possession claim (s. 893.29 Wis. Stats.).
  - (c) Provisions in the land use agreement, if that option is pursued, may include granting the encroacher permission to encroach on the County Forest lands with the following stipulations: no other encroachments will be allowed; the permit is non-transferable; the county must be notified once encroachment is terminated; county continues full ownership and control of property; permittee agrees to waive any rights to any future declaration of ownership or interest in the encroached county property; county reserves the right to cancel the permit and the permit is to be filed in the office of the Forest County Forestry Department Register of Deeds and all fees related to the land use permit shall be paid by the permittee.
  - (d) A copy of the actual Land Use Agreement can be found in Chapter 900.17.

COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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CHAPTER 700

**ROADS, TRAILS AND ACCESS**

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**700 ACCESS CONTROL AND HISTORY**

Resource management and protection activities, recreational uses, and other public uses on the Forest County Forest require several different types of access. Since the Forest is large and diverse, a broad network of access routes have developed. A combination of geography, soils, vegetation, surface waters, seasons of the year, presence/absence of roads or trails, ownership of adjoining lands, and public regulations interact to control access to any part of the Forest.

Many of the existing roads and trails were originally developed as logging roads, forest fire protection lanes, or trails used to reach popular hunting and fishing areas. The locations and standards for these earlier roads were not routinely established by county personnel.

Over the years, the road density and frequency of vehicle use on the Forest has increased in response to an expanding number of motorized recreational vehicles and to an active timber harvest program. Often times, different uses have occurred on the same trails with minimal conflicts. The diverse demands for, and uses of, the County Forest may reach the point where an integrated access management plan is needed.

If a deficiency exists in trail mileage for a given user group, the committee shall receive recommendations and evaluate proposals, with full consideration for resource protection. An existing trail may be reclassified or a new trail created to satisfy demand as consistent with any existing access management plan.

Trails may be closed or their use designation changed, if in the opinion of the committee certain existing trails have either failed to satisfy the intended purpose or are found as contributors to resource degradation.

**705 CHAPTER OBJECTIVES:**

1. Provide direction to the committee and resource managers in order to maintain a network of roads and trails on the County Forest. This will meet the needs for resource management and protection activities, as well as provide public access for recreation opportunities.
2. Identify the distribution, density, and types of roads and uses of roads and trails needed to establish a safe and efficient transportation and recreation system that complements the economic, environmental, and social interest in the County Forest.
3. Identify the existing and future County Forest roads eligible for transportation aids under s.86.315(1), Wis. Stats.
4. Identify areas on the County Forest where the access is limited or restricted.
5. Identify the provisions and criteria that will be policy when addressing management issues on the County Forest.

**710 ROADS**

Forest County Forest staff will oversee the construction and maintenance of all roads within the County Forest. These roads may be constructed and maintained by the County / private contractors working under contract / the direction of the county / other public resource agencies / cooperative agreement with non-profit organizations. The specifications for road construction and maintenance will vary with the frequency, duration, and planned use of each road. Three major types of roads occur on the Forest: permanent primary roads; permanent secondary roads, and temporary roads.

New road establishment should consider information identifying areas with sensitive soils or severe slopes that have the potential for adverse water quality impacts from land management practices. County staff can work with local DNR water resources staff to develop site-specific measures where appropriate.

#### 710.1 PERMANENT PRIMARY FOREST ROADS

These roads are the primary roads accessing the County Forest. They are designed, constructed, and maintained for year-round use. These roads serve essential access corridors for multiple use management. Some of these roads are graveled and routinely graded. Vehicle use may be restricted at various times of the year to minimize physical damage to the road or to accommodate a groomed snowmobile trail.

No forest roads currently qualify for the County Forest Road Aids program on the Forest County Forest. Qualifying roads must meet minimum design standards of a 16-foot surface width and a 20-foot roadway width. A yearly aid payment is used to maintain and improve these certified public roads. The following table lists the roads currently certified under s. 86.31(1), Wis. Stats. Also included are roads proposed for addition once improvements meet statute requirements.

#### 710.2 PERMANENT SECONDARY ROADS

These roads often serve a variety of uses including forest management, fire protection, and recreation. These roads are maintained as part of a permanent road system but are often narrower than permanent primary roads and are built and maintained to lower standards. Some of these roads are designed for use only when the ground is frozen or firm.

Some roads in this category are located in areas on the Forest where motor vehicle use is limited or restricted. In these instances, the roads will be blocked, gated or bermed and/or signed as restricted.

In instances where motorized traffic is restricted, vehicle access will only be authorized for planned management activities, other uses approved by the Forest County Forestry Committee or fire protection. Foot traffic is allowed on all roads.

### 710.3 TEMPORARY ROADS

Many of the roads on the Forest fall into this classification. These roads are designed and constructed for short-term use for a specific project; often for timber harvest access. These roads are used only for a short duration and when the activity is done, the temporary road is closed. These roads are naturally or artificially revegetated and closed by use of earthen berms/bunkers or other physical barriers.

Temporary roads on existing and past sales will be considered for closure. Reasons will include protection of perpetually wet soils, human safety, and prevention of illegal dumping.

The need for new temporary roads will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Road locations will be included in designing timber harvests. Consideration will be given to the objectives within each County Forest unit, existing road density, potential use, and soil type.

## **720 RECREATIONAL TRAIL ACCESS**

This trail network provides access for many recreational opportunities on the Forest. An important role of the Forest is to provide sustainable recreational trails that do not cause long-term natural resource damage, and that are compatible with other uses. Management activities adjacent to recreational trails will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Where deemed necessary, alterations will be made to accommodate the recreational use. The committee has the authority to open, close or relocate trails.

All of the recreational uses of the Forest have corresponding maps in Chapter 900-Appendix.

### 720.1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

Requests for recreational trails will be reviewed by the Committee. Groups requesting specific trail development or use must present a plan for the long term funding and maintenance of proposed trails. Organized trail users and group-sponsored activities must protect Forest County with a minimum of \$300,000 liability insurance coverage and provide a certificate of insurance as proof of coverage.

Construction of any recreational trail in which the activity would increase the erosion potential of one acre or more of land is subject to state and federal stormwater runoff requirements (NR216, Wis. Adm. Code and s. 283.33, Wis. Stats). Construction or development for silvicultural purposes is presently exempt from these requirements. Recreational trail development in Forest County that meets these parameters will employ best management practices for water quality (PUB-FR-093-95) to mitigate any adverse impacts. For projects requiring a storm water permit, an erosion control plan will be prepared for each project depicting the location of the project and surrounding wetlands and what erosion control measures will be employed.

## **725 NON-MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL TRAILS**

### **725.1 HIKING**

#### **725.1.1 Undesignated Hiking Trails**

All portions of the County Forest are open to hiking or foot travel unless marked with signs closing an area.

#### **725.1.2 Designated Hiking Trails**

See map Otter Springs Hiking and Cross Country Ski Trails.

### **725.2 BICYCLING**

#### **725.2.1 Undesignated Bicycle Trails**

All trails, roads, and fire lanes are open for recreational bicycle use. Off-trail mountain bike use may be restricted to designated areas if use causes erosion or other environmental damages.



725.2.2 Designated Bicycle Trails

There are no bike trails currently designated on the Forest County Forest.

725.3 HORSEBACK RIDING

725.3.1 Undesignated Horseback Riding Trails

All trails, roads, and fire lanes are open for horseback trail riding. Off- trail riding within 50 feet of rivers, streams, or lakes is not permitted except when watering horses. Use may be restricted to designated areas if use causes erosion or other environmental damages

725.3.2 Designated Horseback Riding Trails

See Otter Springs Hiking and Cross-Country Ski Trail map.

725.4 CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

725.4.1 Undesignated Cross-Country Ski Trails

All trails, roads, and fire lanes are open for cross-country skiing. Cross- country skiing on groomed snowmobile trails is not permitted due to serious safety concerns.

725.4.2 Designated Cross-Country Ski Trails

See Hemlock Lake and Otter Springs cross-country skiing maps.

Two ski trails are available for public use on the Forest and are maintained for public skiing by volunteers and county staff.

## 725.5 OTHER NON-MOTORIZED USE

Other non-motorized recreational trail uses including, but not limited to, snowshoeing, dog sledding, and hunting on foot are permitted on all trails except where otherwise posted as closed.

## **730 MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL TRAILS**

The use of motorized vehicles on the Forest continues to increase. The design, maneuverability, and power of the vehicles have improved. This has led to greater use; increased trail use conflicts, unnecessary environmental damage, and increased expenses for trail maintenance. Additional regulation on these types of recreational vehicles is needed to protect the Forest and limit adverse impacts on non-motorized uses.

### 730.1 SNOWMOBILING

#### 730.1.1 Undesignated Snowmobile Trails

No cross-country use is permitted; however, snowmobile use is permitted on all logging roads, and fire lanes when the ground is snow-covered. Use on the Forest during other times of the year is not allowed.

#### 730.1.2 Designated Snowmobile Trails

Two types of groomed snowmobile trails are authorized on the Forest: state-funded trails and local club trails.

State trails: A system of state approved and funded snowmobile trails is authorized on designated trails, logging roads, and fire lanes. This system is part of the statewide network of snowmobile trails which links Forest County with adjoining counties as well as the rest of the state. Snowmobile registration and out-of-state user fees are used to support trail development, signing, maintenance, grooming and bridge construction. Annual agreements outline the operation, maintenance, and insurance obligations between Forest County and local snowmobile clubs.

Trails will be regulated by the Forest County Snowmobile ordinance.

DNR's Trail Signing Handbook will be used as the guide for posting standardized signs and will assist in promoting uniformity for trail signing throughout the county. Only trail signs that provide information for safety, regulations, or trail directions will be permitted. Private and business signs are not authorized on the Forest. All trail signs must be mounted on wooden or metal posts.

## 730.2 ALL TERRAIN VEHICLES (ATV)

### 730.2.1 Undesignated ATV Trails

ATVs may only be operated in designated areas, state funded trails or ATV routes. No cross-country use is permitted.

### 730.2.2 Designated ATV Trails

The Forest County Forest has one designated ATV trail eight miles in length. The Forest County ATV trail is located east of Crandon off Hwy W.

The county has contracts with local clubs and organizations for the grooming, brushing, signing and maintenance of this trail.

### 730.3 OTHER MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL VEHICLE TRAILS

#### 730.3.1 Undesignated

Cross-country use of the forest for undesignated motorized use is prohibited. Other motorized use of the County Forest is prohibited on those trails designated for other recreational uses or where trails are blocked, bermed, gated or otherwise blocked.

#### 730.3.2 Designated

The Forestry Committee may enter into agreements with clubs or organizations for the responsibility of signing and maintenance of future trails provided funds are available to support trail maintenance. This trail network may involve a combination of both public and private lands.

### **735 RESTRICTED ACCESS AREAS**

In addition to providing trails for motorized vehicle use, the Forest may also provide and designate areas where motorized equipment is not permitted unless authorized by the Committee. The principal intent of these areas is to prevent environmental damage to sensitive areas, protect historical or archeological sites, protect endangered and threatened species, provide for human safety and provide areas for quiet, secluded recreation.

### **740 WATER ACCESS**

The existing water access points will be maintained to provide a place to launch a small fishing boat or canoe. Not all watercraft will be able to use these access points. These landings are built for public use and not for private boat mooring sites. Mooring or storing boats for longer than 24 hours is prohibited.

740.1 PUBLIC BOAT ACCESS SITES MAINTAINED BY FOREST COUNTY FOREST

1. Veteran's Memorial Park, Lake Metonga

740.2 UNDEVELOPED WATER ACCESS POINTS

Other undeveloped water access points for canoes and boats currently exist on the Forest. These are used routinely to hand launch boats or canoes but have not been developed for boat trailer launching. These sites are not routinely maintained and may be closed if erosion damage becomes severe. All new sites for developed water access must be reviewed and approved by the Committee.

**745 WILD LAKES**

The surface waters encompassed under the wild lakes designation include those restricted use areas that are not open to any gasoline-powered vehicles, watercraft, or snowmobiles except when snow covered. Counties may request that townships, under authority of s. 30.77 (3) Wis. Stats., establish regulations restricting motorized use on these surface waters. Canoes, kayaks, and boats propelled by wind, oars, or electric motors are permitted. Gasoline or diesel powered equipment is not permitted. The intent of these restrictions is to protect the aquatic resources of these lakes but still allow human access. The Forest County Forest has no lakes that qualify for the Wild Lakes designation.

**750 WETLANDS**

In addition to surface waters, all wetlands on the Forest are closed to motorized recreational vehicle use when soils are not frozen. Vehicle use during non-frozen seasons causes soil rutting, compaction and damage to vegetation. The wetlands are not listed individually here but include all areas where soils, groundwater or surface waters support the growth of vegetation commonly associated with wetland plant communities.

**755 ACCESS TO PRIVATE LANDS**

Applications by private parties to build or improve access roads through County Forest land will be considered by the Committee on a case-by-case basis. The following stipulations will be adhered to before an "Access Permit" is granted.

1. No legal easement will be granted, only permission to cross county lands.
2. County retains all rights of ownership
3. The permit is non-transferable
4. The road must be open to the public through county land
5. Forestry personnel will have the right to limit or restrict usage in periods of wet weather when road or tree damage may occur, as well as require users to repair the road or reimburse the county for necessary repairs.
6. A one-time fee will be charged of \$800.00 for the cost and installation of county owned gates, if necessary, to prevent damage to the road system or to prevent access to additional county owned lands. A one-time fee of \$100 will be charged for administrative fees.
7. Forestry personnel will approve location and standards or conditions to be followed
8. At any time the county feels it is no longer in the best interest of the public to continue access, the permit will be terminated.

**760 PUBLIC UTILITY ACCESS**

Access of the County Forest for utility reasons is covered under Chapter 500-24, Public Utilities.

**765 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

The layout and construction of any new road or trail situated on the County Forest shall adhere to *Wisconsin's Best Management Practices for Water Quality* (PUB-FR-093-95). This access management plan addresses the need and diversity level of forest roads and trails within the County Forest. Chapter 6 of the BMP Manual provides guidelines for road construction. Areas with highly erodable soil types, close proximity to streams or lakes, or steep slopes are identified on the erosion susceptibility map included in Chapter 900.1-appendix. Soil disturbance activities in these areas may require mitigating measures in excess of those currently listed in the Best Management Practices manual PUB-FR-093-95. Wider buffers, sediment control structures and water diversion techniques will be used as appropriate in these sensitive areas.

**770 SIGNS**

Signs on the County Forest will be used discreetly to perform and function with minimal disruption to the multiple uses of the Forest. Private signs promoting personal, commercial or political objectives will not be permitted without authorization from Forest County. Signs erected by the county for management purposes or by non-profit recreational trail groups will be as follows:

1. Informational Type Signs
  - A. Interpretive Signs - to educate the general public about forest management practices.
  - B. Public Land Signs - to identify the land as Forest County Forest property.
  - C. Trail Markers - to provide direction and safety to trail users.
  - D. Scientific, Historical or Geological Markers - to identify points of interest.
  - E. Recreational Facility Markers - to identify park entrances, etc.
  - F. Directional Markers.
2. Regulatory Type Signs - to regulate the use of the Forest in specific areas.

## 770.1 SIGNING STANDARDS

To assure that signs will serve a purpose without damaging aesthetics, the following standards will be maintained:

1. All signs will be mounted on treated wood posts or steel posts.
2. Routed wood signs will be used wherever practical. Fiberboard or painted metal signs, when used, will be of neat appearance.
3. Signs placed on snowmobile trails must conform to the DNR Trail Signing Handbook PUB-CF-023 2004.
4. All authorized signs shall be protected by ordinance from being damaged, defaced, obstructed, removed, or possessed by unauthorized persons.
5. All unauthorized signs will be removed by the Forestry staff. No compensation will be afforded for loss or damage to signs during removal. Individuals erecting unauthorized signs may be prosecuted under s. 943.13(3), Wis. Stats.



COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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**CHAPTER 800**

INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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**800 CHAPTER OBJECTIVES**

- (1) To introduce and communicate to the public, the County Board of Supervisors, and to the Wisconsin DNR, the integrated resource approach that forestry, wildlife and other natural resource staff will use on the Forest County Forest during this planning period.
- (2) To provide "Integrated Resource Management Units" (IRMU) that will identify and summarize the natural resources, social and physical management potential and opportunities for each unit.

**805 INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

Integrated Resource Management is defined as: "the simultaneous consideration of ecological, physical, economic, and social aspects of lands, waters and resources in developing and implementing multiple-use, sustained yield management" (Helms, 1998)

This balance of ecological, economic, and social factors is the framework within which the Forest County Forest is managed. This broad definition describes the content of everything within this comprehensive land use plan. Previous chapters have discussed in depth many of the social and economic issues.

For the purpose of this chapter, the scope of Integrated Resource Management includes:

- Forests, habitats, biological communities
- Wetlands and waters
- Wildlife and endangered resources
- Soils and minerals
- Cultural and historical resources

Management of one resource affects the management or use of other resources in an area. Managing each use or resource by itself is less effective than managing all of them in an integrated way. This is a field level approach to integrated resource management. Management decisions are made while considering that each site is part of a larger ecosystem. Similarly, the development and implementation of this plan also considers other planning efforts in order to provide for broader scale management.

**The working definition of Integrated Resource Management means, in large part, keeping natural communities of plants and animals and their environments healthy and productive so people can enjoy and benefit from them now and in the future.**

The remainder of this chapter is written to help communicate how the Forest is managed on an integrated resource approach.

## **810 SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY**

The definition of sustainable forestry in the Wisconsin Administrative Code and the Wisconsin Statutes is as follows:

"the practice of managing dynamic forest ecosystems to provide ecological, economic, social and cultural benefits for present and future generations" NR 44.03(12) Wis. Adm. Code and s.28.04(1)e, Wis. Stats.

**For the purpose of this chapter, sustainable forestry will be interpreted as the management of the Forest to meet the needs of the present without knowingly compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (economic, social, and ecological) by practicing a land stewardship ethic which integrates the growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products with the conservation of soil, air and water quality, and wildlife and fish habitat. This process is dynamic, and changes as we learn from past management.**

## 810.1 TOOLS IN INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### 810.1.1 Compartment Recon

The County will support and utilize the compartment reconnaissance procedures as set forth by the DNR Public Forest Lands Handbook 2460.5. The DNR forester will be responsible for the completion and maintenance of the recon system and will assist in interpretation of the data to be utilized in planning and scheduling resource management.

### 810.1.2 Forest Habitat Classification System

The Forest Habitat Classification System (*A Guide to Forest Communities and Habitat Types of Northern Wisconsin Second Edition; Kotar, et al.*) is a natural classification system for forest communities and the sites on which they develop. It utilizes systematic interpretation of natural vegetation with emphasis on understory species.

The Forest Habitat Classification System is an ecological tool that promotes a common language for interpreting site capability based on potential natural vegetation. Its primary use is the assessment of biological potential of upland forest sites. Through the application of Forest Habitat Classification, land managers are better able to assess site potential of current stands, identify ecological and silvicultural alternatives, predict the effectiveness of possible silvicultural treatments, assess feasible management alternatives, and choose appropriate management objectives.

Data will be collected in order to classify the entire forest. This information should be collected along with, and made part of, the compartment reconnaissance system during regular field inspections. This data should also be compared to soil survey information in order to associate the relationships between forest habitat types and soil types.

Forest Habitat Classification Types are discussed in greater detail in the "Integrated Resource Management Units" (Section 880) section of this chapter.

### 810.1.3 Soil Surveys

Forestry staff's knowledge of forest ecology and their experience across the landscape can assist in associating forest habitat types and site indices with soil type information. These associations can be beneficial in determining management prescriptions for specific sites. Detailed soil surveys, when available, will be made a part of the compartment reconnaissance system and continue to be correlated to the Forest Habitat Classification system.

Soil survey information may be obtained from the Natural Resource Conservation Service office.

### 810.1.4 National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units/Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin

Integrated resource management recognizes that an individual forest site is part of a larger landscape, and management activities can have an impact beyond a specific site. The National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units (NHFEU) is a useful tool in understanding natural landscapes.

The Wisconsin DNR uses Ecological Landscapes of Wisconsin (WDNR Handbook 1805.1) which is an ecological land classification system based on the National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units (NHFEU). Ecological landscapes distinguish land areas different from one another in ecological characteristics. A combination of physical and biological factors including climate, geology, topography, soils, water, and vegetation are used. They provide a useful tool and insight into ecosystem management. Land areas identified and mapped in this manner are known as ecological units.

Landtype Associations (LTA's) are considered landscape-scale ecological units, and are identified by surficial geology, patterns of vegetation, soil parent

materials, and water tables. Most LTA's are between 10,000 and 300,000 acres in size.

Each landtype association contains a general description of characters such as landform, historic vegetation, current vegetation, water resources, land area, socioeconomic data, agriculture, population, and ecological opportunities.

Goals can be developed for an LTA based in part on its capability, productivity, unique character, and the scarcity or abundance of similar LTA's in the state, region or beyond. Objectives for vegetation management, wildlife habitat, ecological restoration, and recreation use can be tailored to the characteristics and potentials of the ecosystem.

#### 810.1.5 Integrated Pest Management

Integrated Pest Management for the purpose of this Plan, is defined as follows:

“the maintenance of destructive agents, including insects, at tolerable levels, by the planned use of a variety of preventive, suppressive, or regulatory tactics and strategies that are ecologically and economically efficient and socially acceptable”

The Committee has the authority to approve and direct the use of pesticides and other reasonable alternatives in an integrated pest management program on the Forest.

Refer to Chapter 600 (610.3) for more detailed discussion and integrated pest management strategies.

#### 810.1.6 Best Management Practices for Water Quality

Often the most practical and cost-effective method to assure that forestry operations do not adversely affect water quality on the County Forest is to utilize



"best management practices" (BMP's) as described in *Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality*. Publication number FR093.

Consistent with the aforementioned manual (page 6), Forest County will use BMP's on the Forest with the understanding that the application of BMP's may be modified for specific site conditions with guidance from a forester or other natural resource professional. Modifications will provide equal or greater water quality protection, or have no impact on water quality. Areas with highly erodable soil types, close proximity to streams or lakes, or steep slopes may require mitigating measures in excess of those outlined in the manual. All Forest County employees practicing forestry will receive BMP training. Additionally, Forest County will encourage BMP training of all logging contractors that operate on County timber sales.

810.1.7 Forest Fire Management Refer to Chapter 600 (605)

810.1.7.1 Uncontrolled Fire Refer to Chapter 600

810.1.7.2 Prescribed Fire

Prescribed burning on the County Forest may play an important role in management. Many of the plant communities present today are the result of wild fires.

As the needs are presented to regenerate or maintain timber types or other plant communities, the Committee will examine the costs and benefits of each opportunity. Increased regulations, the county's cost of completing the burn, and the risk of breakouts and uncontrolled fires will have to be considered with any benefits of vegetation management through prescribed burning.

All prescribed burning will be done in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes 26.12, 26.14, and the DNR Prescribed Burn Handbook 4360.5 and in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources per section 605.5 of this plan.

#### 810.1.8 Outside Expertise, Studies and Survey

Additional data necessary to make management decisions on the County Forest will be sought from agencies or individuals, who in the Committee's opinion, are best equipped to provide that service. This data will be used as appropriate for management planning.

##### 810.1.8.1 Water Resources

The DNR fisheries biologist and the water management specialist will provide surveys, studies, and technical advice as necessary to prepare and carry out recreational planning affecting waters on the County Forest. (Also see Chapter 800, Section 840.6.9).

##### 810.1.8.2 Wildlife Resources

DNR wildlife biologists will implement population and habitat surveys, provide technical advice, and direct assistance needed for wildlife management planning and implementation on County Forest lands. (Also see Chapter 500, Section 530; Chapter 800, Section 840). Wildlife projects are identified and implemented in collaboration with the County Forest administrator, DNR liaison forester, and the Committee.

##### 810.1.8.3 Soil Resources

Soil maps and surveys prepared by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) will be used in various phases of planning.

##### 810.1.8.4 Mineral Resources

The DNR may provide information valuable for management of gravel and other mineral resources. (Also see Chapter 500, Section 515.2).

#### 810.1.8.5 Wetland Resources

Maps prepared by the DNR's Bureau of Fisheries Management and Habitat Protection, may be utilized for identifying wetlands. Although not comprehensive, particularly in forested areas, these maps are a good initial tool for identifying wetlands on County Forest lands. Assistance and technical advice will be requested from the DNR water management specialist when wetlands may be affected by management practices. The Army Corps of Engineers will also be consulted as appropriate. In addition, Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for protecting water quality will be used. (Also see 820.2.2 for further details).

#### 810.1.8.6 Navigable Streams

The DNR's water regulations specialist will be consulted when navigable stream crossings or navigable stream management projects are being planned. (Also see Chapter 840.6.5). Best Management Practices for protecting water quality will be used.

#### 810.1.8.7 Floodplains

Maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be used to identify floodplains. The County zoning staff may be consulted regarding management activities in the floodplain.

#### 810.1.8.8 Cultural Resources

Management planning will take into consideration historical and archaeological sites. More information may be obtained from the State Historical Society or the DNR's archeologist. (Also see Chapter 500, Section 525.6 for further details)

#### 810.1.8.9 Entomology / Pathology

Wisconsin DNR forest pest staff will provide information and consultation as requested by the County. (Also see Chapter 610 for more information on forest pest control.

810.1.8.10 Endangered Resources

DNR endangered resource staff will provide Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) information and are available for consultation on endangered resources issues.

810.1.9 Local Silvicultural Field Trials

To date, no field trials have been completed or are ongoing on the County Forest.

A compilation of silvicultural trials on State and County lands is available at:  
*<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/sciences/silviculture/index.html>*

810.1.10 Local Citizen Involvement

The Forest County Forestry, Parks and Recreation Committee is an open forum to listen, evaluate and incorporate, where appropriate, the public's input into management of the County Forest.

**820**

**BIOLOGICAL COMMUNITY TYPES**

A community is an assemblage of different plant and animal species, living together in a particular area, at a particular time in specific habitats. Communities are complex and dynamic systems named for their dominant plant species.

Species/community information has been condensed to familiarize the reader with the make-up of the Forest.

Refer to Chapter 130.1.4 for more information

**820.1 FORESTED COMMUNITIES**

The forested cover types are made up of a variety of size classes (regeneration, sapling-pole, and saw timber) and structure (canopy, layers, ground vegetation, dead and downed material, and inclusions). Forested communities within the Forest County Forest cover approximately 92% of the Forest.

Forest cover types associated with the County Forest are:

Aspen - 29%. Consisting of primarily aspen species often found in combination with paper birch and red maple

Northern Hardwoods -51%. Consisting of a mixture of upland hardwood species including sugar maple, yellow birch, basswood, ash and red maple

Hemlock Hardwoods - <1%. More than 50% hemlock associated with northern hardwood species

Swamp Hardwoods - 1%. More than 50% swamp hardwood species including black ash, red maple, and elm.

White Pine <1%. More than 50% white pine.

Red Pine – 1 %. More than 50% red pine.

Fir-Spruce - <1%. Consisting of swamp border or upland types with mixed species, predominately balsam fir and spruce associated with white pine, cedar, red maple, aspen, and birch

Swamp Conifer - 5%. Lowland type typified by balsam fir, cedar, and spruce in combination with red maple and other lowland hardwoods.

Black spruce - 2%. More than 50% swamp conifer species with black spruce predominating.

Tamarack - <1%. More than 50% swamp conifer species with tamarack predominating.

White cedar - <1%. More than 50% swamp conifer species with white cedar predominating.

White birch - <1%. Consisting of a majority white birch. Often found in combination with aspen and red maple.

## 820.2 NON-FORESTED COMMUNITIES

Non-forested communities within the Forest County Forest cover approximately 8% of the forest. In broad categories, they are: upland (3%), wetland (4.5%) and water (<1%).

Non-forested habitats are important components of management within the County Forest. Upland and wetland non-forest types provide important habitat for distinct groups of species.

The following provides a general description of the non-forested communities:

#### 820.2.1 Upland Non-Forest (3%)

Upland Non-Forest areas of the County Forest include:

Grass openings – consists of upland grasses, such as brome, quack, bluegrass, timothy, big and little bluestem, and Indian grass.

Herbaceous vegetation - ground cover predominated by herbaceous species with bracken fern, raspberry, blackberry, sweet clover, giant ragweed, stinging nettle, upland aster, goldenrod, and prairie dock being common.

Shrub openings - primarily upland sites less than 10% stocked with tree species but having 50% or more of the area stocked with taller growing, persistent shrubs. This includes, but is not limited to, shrubs such as hazel, gray dogwood, juneberry, sumac, ninebark and prickly ash.

#### 820.2.2 Wetlands (4.5%)

Wisconsin State Statutes define a wetland as “an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic vegetation, and which has soils indicative of wet conditions.” Wetland communities are recognized to be a complex association of plants and animals, soils and water levels having special natural values. They are fragile systems that undergo rapid degradation when affected by incompatible uses and unskilled management. Wetlands provide many functional values including shoreline and flood protection, water quality

protection, groundwater recharge, and animal and plant habitat. Therefore, it is the policy of Forest County to preserve, protect and manage the wetlands under its jurisdiction in a manner that recognizes the natural values of wetlands and their importance in the environment. To this end the County will:

- 1) Recognize wetland values in management plans, taking reasonable steps to minimize harmful effects.
- 2) Cooperate with the DNR in wetland inventories and in preparation of essential wetland information.
- 3) Maintain control of vital wetlands under its jurisdiction when to relinquish such control would risk substantial site alteration and subsequent degradation of wetland values vital to the area and the state.
- 4) Minimize adverse changes in the quality or quantity of the flow of waters that nourish wetlands.
- 5) Cooperate with local, state and national agencies and citizens to increase understanding of the importance of wetlands and the need for land and water stewardship in guiding development decisions.
- 6) Cooperate with the DNR in wetland management activities that would enhance the quality and diversity of wetlands in the county and the region.

Wetlands are the transitional habitats between upland and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or where the land is covered by shallow water. They presently make up a total of 45% of the County Forest. Wetlands are made up of 15 descriptive types (adapted from PUBL-WZ-029-94). They include:

Shallow, open water – wetlands characterized by submergent, floating and floating-leaved aquatic vegetation such as pondweed, water lilies, water milfoil, and duckweed. Water depths are generally less than 6.6 feet.

Deep marshes - wetlands characterized by emergent vegetations such as cattails and pickerel weed and floating leaved plants such as white and yellow water lily and watershield. Water depths of 6 feet are typically found on deep marshes.

Shallow marshes - wetlands characterized by persistent emergent vegetation such as cattails and pickerelweed, etc., and water depths to 1.5 feet.

Sedge meadow - wetlands characterized by sedges and cattails. Surface water depths to 6 inches in winter and early spring, and exposed saturated soil surface in summer.

Fresh (wet) meadow – wetlands dominated by grasses, such as red-top grass and the invasive, non-native, reed canary grass, and by forbs such as giant golden rod growing on saturated soils.

Open bog – wetlands that are composed of living sphagnum moss growing over a layer of acid peat. Herbs and low shrubs colonize the mat and immature or stunted trees of black spruce and/or tamarack may be scattered through the area.

Coniferous bog – wetlands similar to open bogs, except that mature black spruce and/or tamarack trees are the dominant species growing on the sphagnum moss mat. Black spruce and heath family shrubs are characteristics only of acid peats, whereas tamarack can grow in calcareous peats, such as those of northern white cedar swamps.

Alder thicket – wetlands similar to shrub-carrs, but dominated by speckled alder. It can also include other shrub species like high bush cranberry and sweet gale.

Lowland hardwood swamp – wetlands dominated by deciduous hardwood trees. Soils are saturated during much of the growing season, and may be inundated by as much as a foot of standing water. Species include black ash, red maple, yellow birch, and northern white cedar.



Coniferous Swamp – wetlands dominated by lowland conifers, primarily northern white cedar and tamarack. Soils are saturated during much of the growing season and may be inundated by as much as a foot of standing water. Soils are usually organic. A sphagnum moss mat is not present.

Seasonally flooded basin – wetlands in poorly drained, shallow depressions that may have standing water for several weeks of each year, but are usually dry for much of the growing season. Typical species include smartweeds, beggarsticks, and wild millet. These basins often support an abundance of plant seeds and invertebrates, which make them ideal feeding and resting areas for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds.

#### 820.2.3 Open Water Habitats (<1%)

Open water habitats are permanently flooded lands below the deep-water boundary of wetlands. Water is generally too deep to support emergent vegetation. Presence of these aquatic habitats within a forest landscape greatly increases the number of wildlife species that can potentially occur. They include rivers, lakes, and streams and occur on <1% of the forest landscape. They are broken down into:

Lakes - lakes, ponds, and flowages in excess of 40 acres in an area; or rivers in excess of 1/8 of a mile in width.

Streams - intermittent or permanent watercourses with slow water velocities and are usually defined as being less than 1/8 mile in width.

Rivers - wetlands and deep-water habitats contained in a channel through which the water flows and associated with forested riparian zones.

## 830 PLANT COMMUNITIES MANAGEMENT

Forest County recognizes the importance of maintaining the diversity of the Forest under an ecosystem approach. The process involved in making management decisions to encourage, or not to encourage, specific species or communities is complex. It includes an understanding of:

- Objectives of the County Forest.
- Integration of the National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units (NHFEU - landforms, soils, climate, vegetation classification at multiple scales).
- Application of habitat type classification to identify ecological potentials and silvicultural alternatives.
- Past, present, and future desired condition.
- Surrounding ownership patterns and their generalized objectives.
- Socio-economic needs.

### 830.1 SILVICULTURE

Plant communities are normally managed within the guidelines found in the *Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook 2431.5.* Silviculture is the practice of controlling forest composition, structure, and growth to maintain and enhance the forest's utility for any purpose. Typically, silvicultural guidelines are written to encourage a stand to contain the greatest quality and/or quantity of timber under either an even-, or uneven-aged system.

Forest County manages its timber resource on a multiple use and sustainable basis. Economics play a part in management decision making, however, it is not the only factor taken into consideration. Ecosystem diversity, aesthetics, wildlife habitat, recreation and watershed protection are some of the other factors considered when making management decisions.

A summary of management on the Forest County Forest is described as follows:

#### 830.1.1 Aspen Management

Aspen is a shade intolerant species that is found throughout various areas of the forest and is managed on an even-aged basis. This means that aspen needs full sunlight to regenerate and the best method for creating optimum conditions for stand replacement is clearcutting.

The aspen type is recognized as providing habitat values to a wide variety of wildlife species as well as being an important species for economics and fiber production.

The extent of this vital resource has been steadily declining since the 1960s. The chief reasons for the decline are: 1) lack of harvest as stands reach maturity (natural succession) and 2) selective harvest. In both instances, the end result is conversion to more shade tolerant timber types.

Forest County is committed to maintaining its aspen acreage and will accomplish this by regenerating the mature aspen stands through the use of clearcuts. Aesthetic concerns can be mitigated by retaining pine and/or hardwood tree species on the sites, limiting the size of harvests, and creating irregularly shaped sale boundaries.

#### 830.1.2 Northern Hardwood Management

The northern hardwood timber type consists mainly of sugar maple, basswood, red maple, white ash and yellow birch. Other species found in the northern hardwood type are red oak, white birch, red and white pine and white spruce.

Northern hardwood stands are managed on an uneven-aged basis to produce quality hardwood timber. Individual tree selection is the most common method of harvesting in northern hardwood.

### 830.1.3 Red Pine Management

Red pine on the Forest County Forest is typically of plantation origin. Plantations were established starting in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Red pine is managed for high quality timber production. Typical management of red pine plantations consists of a row thinning followed by a combination of row and individual tree removal or simply individual tree removal. Red pine stands on higher quality sites will be managed on a 150 year rotation and will be allowed to convert to northern hardwoods.

## 830.2 LOCALLY UNCOMMON TREES

The presence or lack of a particular plant species is dependent on the land's capabilities, climate, and natural (e.g. fire, browsing) and/or man-caused (e.g. logging, farming) disturbances. The present scarcity of the listed species makes them a source of concern.

The following are considered uncommon on the Forest and perhaps to some extent across the regional landscape:

830.2.1        American Elm (*Ulmus americana*) is scarce primarily due to mortality caused by the introduction of Dutch elm disease. Existing elm will normally be left uncut in hopes that they may continue in the landscape as potential resistant seed source individuals. Where possible during silvicultural operations, efforts will be made to encourage regeneration of American elm.

830.2.2        Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*) occurs throughout the County Forest. Due to butternut decline, fewer individuals are present than in previous years. Existing healthy butternut will normally be left in hopes that they may continue in the landscape as potential resistant seed source individuals. Where possible during silvicultural operations, efforts may be made to encourage regeneration of butternut. This may include cutting to encourage stump sprouts in certain situations.

### 830.3 Trees Locally Difficult to Regenerate

There are certain tree species whose home ranges are within the County Forest that are difficult to regenerate. In many cases this difficulty is related to the exclusion of fire from the environment. In other cases this may be due to browsing by deer. The following species, normally found within the county, are found to be difficult to regenerate:

#### 830.3.1 White birch

White birch (also referred to as paper birch) is a shade intolerant species and is generally found in stands of timber of similar age. A mineral seedbed appears to be necessary to regenerate white birch and it is assumed that most white birch present on the forest is of fire origin. Drought conditions of 1989 and 1990, coupled with unseasonably warm temperatures and secondary pathogens, resulted in mortality to nearly 50% of the white birch on the Forest.

Existing stands of white birch should be considered for scarification coupled with shelterwood harvests. Initial trials using this method have proven successful.

### 830.3.2 Northern red oak

The red oak type is widespread across the County Forest outside of the low fertility sandy soils. Red oak tends to favor habitat types that are also suitable for northern hardwood species. On many sites, normal thinning practices tend to promote these other species. In many cases regeneration under nearly pure red oak stands tends towards red maple and poor quality sugar maple. Over time, this shade tolerant seral stage will replace the red oak. The difficulty in regenerating red oak on these sites appears to be related to lack of soil disturbance with the removal of fire from the landscape

Red oak has very high wildlife value due to its mast production and tendency to produce cavities that are suitable for wildlife dens. It also has very high timber value in sawlog-sized timber. Because of these factors, it is important to retain red oak on the Forest County Forest

Silvicultural trials using prescribed burns coupled with shelterwood harvests appear to be successful. However, conducting these burns on a large scale has proven difficult. Scarification and other methods will continue to be investigated.

### 830.4 EXOTIC PLANT SPECIES OF CONCERN

Exotic or non-indigenous invasive plant species can cause significant ecological and economic damage to the Forest. Some invasive species, such as common and glossy buckthorn, eliminate not only wildflowers but also limit the regeneration of tree species. Keeping them from dominating the understory is critical to the long-term health and economic viability of the forest. Currently, Forest County Forest has few significant infestations of invasive plants. With training, vigilance, and control efforts, new infestations can be managed or eliminated. There are many highly invasive plants that are threatening to invade much of the northern forests in Wisconsin.

Buckthorn has been identified on the county forest in scattered small patches.

### 830.5 LEGALLY PROTECTED PLANT SPECIES

There are some plants in Wisconsin that are afforded protection under the Federal Endangered Species Law, the State Endangered and Threatened Species Law (s. 29.604 Wis. Stats. and NR 27 Wis. Adm. Code), or both. Under Wisconsin State Law, no one may possess or sell any wild plant that is listed without a valid endangered or threatened (ET) species permit. On public lands or lands one does not own, lease or have permission of the landowner, one may not cut, root up, sever, injure, destroy, remove, transport, or carry away a listed plant without an ET species permit. There is an exemption on public lands for forestry, agriculture and utility activity under the state law.

In the Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) program the DNR tracks information on these species in the State. Below is a list of legally protected plants known to occur in Forest County. See NHI report in Chapter 900.

### 830.6 OTHER PLANT SPECIES AND NATURAL COMMUNITIES OF CONCERN – NHI

The NHI program at the DNR also tracks information on rare species and natural communities, in addition to legally protected species.

#### 830.6.1 Special Concern Plants

Special Concern Species are those species in which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected, but not yet proven. The main purpose of this category is to focus attention on certain species before they become threatened or endangered. A list of Special Concern plant species known to occur in Forest County can be found in the current NHI report (Chapter 900, Section 900.7).

#### 830.6.2 Natural Communities

Similarly, specific records of natural communities are also tracked. See NHI report.

## **840 WILDLIFE SPECIES MANAGEMENT**

### **840.1 BACKGROUND**

For the purpose of this plan, wildlife will include all native birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and insects with a strong focus on the natural communities in which they live. Wildlife biologists will emphasize habitat management that interrelates and benefits wildlife, and complements sound forestry practices. Concerns about the biological diversity of the County Forest and how it fits into the regional, continental and global perspective, may cause wildlife management to place increased emphasis on segments of the forest community. Practices such as old growth, snag and den tree management, access management, forest openings maintenance, oak management, and aspen maintenance, can be priorities in the dynamics of forest management. A primary goal of wildlife management on the Forest County Forest is to provide a diversity of healthy ecosystems necessary to sustain native populations for their biological, recreational, cultural and economic values.

#### **840.1.1 Technical Planning**

Planning will be a cooperative effort of the administrator, DNR liaison forester and wildlife biologist in formulating management plans and utilizing wildlife management techniques for the overall protection and enhancement of the forest community, of which wildlife is a key component.

#### **840.1.2 Guidelines**

DNR manual codes on Endangered and Threatened Species Permits Issue (1724.5), Feasibility Studies and WEPA Analyses for Establishing or Modifying Property Project Boundaries (2105.1), Guidelines for Defining Forest-Wildlife Habitat Management (2112), Forest Opening Maintenance and Construction (2112.1), and the Public Forest Lands Handbook (2460.5), are important references and guidelines in wildlife planning efforts.



### 840.1.3 Inventory

Habitat needs will be determined by analysis of forest reconnaissance information. Population estimates will be conducted periodically by DNR wildlife, endangered resources personnel, and other trained cooperators.

## 840.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND AREAS OF FOCUS

In applying this Plan to the forest, the following areas of focus were identified in achieving Plan objectives:

### 840.2.1 General Management Policies

Forest management practices may require modification to benefit wildlife and biodiversity in certain situations. The following will be considered in forest management planning:

- 1) Even-aged regeneration harvests (clearcuts) should vary in size and shape.
- 2) A diversity of stand age, size and species.
- 3) Mast-bearing trees and shrubs, den trees, and an adequate number and variety of snags.
- 4) Cull trees (future snag or den trees) not interfering with specific high value trees.
- 5) Timber types, habitat conditions and impacts on affected wildlife.
- 6) Access management.
- 7) Best management practices for water quality (BMP's).

## 840.3 HABITATS OF IMPORTANCE

Important habitat types are those cover types known to be of importance to certain native wildlife and whose absence would make that wildlife significantly less abundant. These shortages may be on a local or broader scale. The following habitat types can be considered important:

#### 840.3.1 Aspen

The aspen type is recognized as providing habitat values to a wide variety of wildlife species. This type will continue to be regenerated, with consideration given to reserving scattered den and mast-producing trees in the process.

#### 840.3.2 Forest openings

Permanent grass openings are essential to well-balanced wildlife habitat. Openings will be maintained where they exist or be developed where needed.

#### 840.3.3 Lowland conifer

Cedar, hemlock, and balsam fir types are important for winter cover for many wildlife species. These forest types will be maintained where practical.

#### 840.3.4 Oak

The oak type is important to wildlife because of its cavity-forming potential and mast production. Future management will focus on protecting and regenerating this type.

#### 840.3.5 Forest Game Species

The management of forest game (white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, black bear, turkey, snowshoe hare, and numerous furbearers) is centered on maintaining early successional species such as aspen, jack pine, white birch, and scrub oak; with aspen and oak being the primary species of importance.

Manual Code 2112 is a Wisconsin DNR document that establishes guidelines for measuring forest game habitat. It has been used like a barometer to measure changes in forest wildlife habitat. While the scope of Manual Code 2112 can be narrow (deer habitat units compared with landscapes and ecoregions) by today's management standards, the impacts are broad. Foresters, in concert with wildlife biologists, will continue to monitor forest game species and adjust land management prescriptions where appropriate.

### 840.3.6 Forest Non-Game Species

Efforts will be made with the DNR to inventory existing populations, identify needs, and maintain valuable habitat types.

#### 840.3.6.1 Neotropical Migrant Birds

Neotropical migrant birds (NTMB) are songbirds that breed in North America and winter in Central and South America. There are over 120 species of NTMBs that spend a portion of each year in Wisconsin. Different NTMBs utilize a wide variety of habitats including forests, shrubs, and grasslands. Warblers, tanagers, vireos, thrushes, swallows, blue-winged teal and hummingbirds are just some examples of NTMBs. In addition, these species play an important role in forest health by consuming large amounts of insects, including forest pest species such as gypsy moths and forest tent caterpillars.

In recent years, several neotropical species have experienced significant declines in population. These declines likely reflect a reduction in suitability, or a loss of habitat where these species breed, overwinter and/or migrate. Grassland birds seem to be experiencing the most precipitous declines range wide, due to a loss of habitat both in North America and on the wintering grounds in South America. However, species that nest in forests or shrublands, such as the cerulean warbler, golden-winged warbler, and veery are also declining nationwide.

In some cases these declines may be tied to forest fragmentation. There are really two forms of forest fragmentation, each with different impacts on forest birds. One form of forest fragmentation occurs when portions of a forest are converted into non-forest cover types (urbanization and agricultural). This is permanent fragmentation and poses the greatest threat to all forest wildlife. The second type is the fragmentation of habitat or cover type. This habitat fragmentation occurs naturally due to local geological features or can be a result of human activity (harvest activity). Both kinds of forest fragmentation have impacts on neotropical birds including changes in competition for resources, predation rates, and perceived quality of habitat. Each species of NTMB respond to forest disturbance differently. Since there are so many neotropical migrants

that utilize a wide variety of habitats and successional stages it's difficult to make generalizations as to the impacts of forest management on the health of certain bird populations. Species such as chestnut-sided warblers and mourning warblers benefit from early successional species produced by clearcutting. Species that rely on more mature forests or interior forests, such as ovenbirds or black-throated blue warblers, will be negatively impacted by intensive forest management. To assure a rich diversity of NTMBs in Wisconsin's forests, emphasis should be placed on forest management guidelines that promote habitat for NTMBs with the most specialized habitat needs.

Forests and associated wetlands of the western Great Lakes, including Wisconsin, support some of North America's highest densities and most diverse assemblages of breeding birds (Howe et al. 1996). While some forest/shrub species mentioned above are decreasing, according to the Federal Breeding Bird Survey (BBS), the majority of forest/shrub species that breed in Wisconsin are increasing. Wisconsin's private, County, State, and National Forests are still relatively intact and have regained much of their structural and compositional diversity that was once reduced in the big "Cutover" in the early 1900's.

As habitat is lost and fragmented by development on private lands, Wisconsin's County Forests continue to provide increasingly important habitat to numerous NTMB species that occur in a wide variety of forest types and age classes.

#### 840.4 LEGALLY PROTECTED ANIMAL SPECIES

The Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the Lacey Act together provide for the protection of wild animals threatened with extinction. The State Endangered and Threatened Species Law also requires that the State assume responsibility for conserving wild animals by restricting and regulating the taking, possession, transportation, processing, or sale of endangered or threatened wild animals within its jurisdiction. Further, the Federal Migratory Bird Act and the Eagle Protection Act provide additional protection for certain species of birds. Because animals usually travel freely from one property to another, they belong to everyone. Therefore, if a species is legally protected,

it is protected anywhere it occurs in Forest County. See NHI report for threatened and Endangered species on the County Forest.

#### 840.5 OTHER ANIMALS OF SPECIAL CONCERN – NHI

Just as with plants, the DNR tracks information on rare animal species when some problem of abundance or disturbance is suspected but not yet proven. The main purpose of this category is to focus attention on certain species before they become threatened or endangered. Below is a list of Special Concern animal species known to occur in Forest County .See NHI report for threatened and Endangered species on the County Forest.

In addition to NHI a statewide list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need can be found at: [http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/cwcp/SGCN\\_ID.pdf](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/cwcp/SGCN_ID.pdf)

#### 840.6 FISH AND WATERS MANAGEMENT

Public waters shall be managed to provide for optimum natural fish production, an opportunity for quality recreation, and a healthy balanced aquatic ecosystem. Emphasis will also be placed on land-use practices that benefit the aquatic community. Management of County Forest lands will attempt to preserve and/or improve fish habitat and water quality.

##### 840.6.1 Technical Planning

Management of all waters within the County Forest is the responsibility of the DNR. Technical assistance will be provided by the local fisheries biologist. Studies and management will be conducted in the manner described in DNR Fish Management Handbook 3605.9.

#### 840.6.2 Water Surveys

Comprehensive lake and stream surveys on the County forest will be conducted by the DNR fisheries biologist as required. The publication, “Surface Water Resources of Forest County”, contains additional information relative to these waters.

#### 840.6.3 Population Surveys

Surveys of fish populations in waters within the County Forest will be conducted by the DNR as required and will generally run concurrently with water surveys. Fish management programs will be guided by these surveys.

#### 840.6.4 Lake Management

Management of lakes within the County Forest will be consistent with the capability of the resource and any unique aspects associated with that resource.

#### 840.6.5 Stream Management

Trout streams on the County Forest will be managed to protect and enhance their quality. Streams containing warm water or cool water species will be managed to perpetuate their inherent qualities. Corresponding land and water use practices will be consistent with this policy.

#### 840.6.6 Best Management Practices for Water Quality

Protection of water resources in the county will be consistent with the “Wisconsin Forestry Best Management Practices (B.M.P.s) for Water Quality”. Examples of these protective measures are:

1. Uncut riparian zones
2. Erosion control measures
3. Stream bank protection

#### 840.6.7 Shoreland Zoning

The practice of silviculture within shoreland zoning jurisdiction is exempt from zoning permit requirements provided it is carried out without filling, flooding, draining, dredging, ditching tilling or excavating. Shoreland zoning jurisdiction is defined as “areas of Forest County which are within one thousand (1,000) feet of the ordinary high water mark of navigable lakes, ponds or flowages. Lakes, ponds or flowages in Forest County shall be presumed to be navigable if they are listed in the DNR publication "Surface Water Resources of Forest County" or shown on the 7.5 minute series United States Geological Survey quadrangle maps and within three hundred (300) feet of the ordinary high water mark of navigable rivers or streams or to the landward side of the floodplain, whichever distance is greater. Rivers and streams in Forest County shall be presumed to be navigable if they are designated as either continuous or intermittent waterways on the United States Geological Survey quadrangle maps. Flood Insurance Rate Maps, which have been adopted by Forest County, shall be used to determine the extent of the floodplain of navigable rivers or streams in Forest County. Floodplain areas are subject to the Forest County Zoning and Shorelands Protection Ordinance.”

#### 840.6.8 Access and development

Access and development of County Forest waters will be limited to those activities consistent with the above water management policies. See Chapter 740 also for further information on water access.

#### 840.6.9 Important Water Resources

Management activities adjacent to these water resources, or in areas with sensitive soils or severe slopes, should consider measures above and beyond the customary BMP practices. County staff may work with their liaison forester in cooperation with the local DNR water resources staff to develop site-specific measures where appropriate.

An inventory of water resources can be obtained from DNR Water staff for the County.

Important water resources on the Forest County Forest include:

- Otter Creek
- Lake Metonga
- Swamp Creek
- Hemlock Creek
- Bug Lake
- Lake Lucerne

A complete listing of exceptional and outstanding water resources can be found in Chapter 130.1.8.

## **850 LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**

### **850.1 BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

For the purposes of this plan, biological diversity will be interpreted to reference the variety and abundance of species, their genetic composition, and the communities, ecosystems, and landscapes in which they occur. It also refers to ecological structures, functions, and processes that occur in ecosystems to sustain the system as viable entities. The forest landscape, a mosaic of plants and animals of various sizes and ages, are in constant flux due to succession from both natural and planned events.

Opportunities to manage Forest County Forest lands toward these ends will be continued and improved, provided they are deemed to be in the public's best interest by the Committee and within the framework of the County Forest Law (s.28.11 Wis. Stats.).

### **850.2 HABITAT FRAGMENTATION**

The adoption of management plans and strategies developed cooperatively with neighboring forest owners and managers will help to consider fragmentation on a landscape level. A continued program of encouraging land acquisition within the forest blocking will decrease negative impact of forest fragmentation by land uses other than forestry.



### 850.3 HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS / AREAS (HCVF) AND EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCES

#### 850.3.1 Areas High in Locally, Regionally or Nationally Significant Biodiversity Values.

Eastern hemlock stands: Gumms Bog hemlock stand is a relic stand of old growth hemlock located south of the spring ponds. The stand is designated as an unmanaged natural area. No management will be conducted within this stand.

#### 850.3.2 Culturally and Locally Significant Sites

Otter Creek Spring House. The spring house is a small cedar log structure that is listed on the National Historic register. The spring house was used by the CCC camp located just to the North of the spring. After the CCC camp the spring ponds were a favorite trout fishing hole. Numerous people scribed their names and catch in the logs. The structure is in very poor shape.