
Wisconsin Forestry Notes

June 2012

Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry

MFL efficiency study begins

Study will look for efficiencies in the administration of the Managed Forest Law program.

The Division of Forestry has contracted with Dovetail Partners to conduct an assessment of the [Managed Forest Law \(MFL\) program](#) to identify efficiencies that may be gained in the program administration. Due to the popularity of MFL (the program has more than 49,000 individual entries covering over 3.3 million acres), the Division can no longer sustain its current level of oversight without adversely affecting other Division programs. Personnel and budgetary investment cannot keep pace with a program that continues to grow at a rate of 3% each year. Dovetail Partners will be engaging a variety of stakeholders involved with MFL this summer and then recommending solutions this fall regarding efficiencies in MFL program administration both within the Division's Forest Management bureau and in our field operations. Dovetail will continue to work with the Division and our partners on implementation of solutions through next spring. For additional information about this project, contact [Bob Mather](#), Bureau of Forest Management Director, at 608/266-1727.

The 2012 Fire Season, so far...

Wisconsin's fire season started early in 2012 ... and is still going!

Mild winter weather with below normal snow fall resulted in an early start to the fire season this year. Fire crews had already logged in 25 wildfires in January and February, traditionally a time for preparing for spring fire season. Fires were numerous and burning statewide by March, calling for periodic suspension of burning permits. [Fire weather conditions](#) in April resulted in the implementation of Emergency Burning Restrictions in the storm damaged area in northwest Wisconsin, just two days after the Governor made a visit to Siren for an update on storm recovery efforts. DNR, in conjunction with the National Weather Service, issued a Red Flag Warning on Easter Sunday for nearly all of Wisconsin. (A Red Flag Warning is issued when wind, temperature and humidity combine to produce conditions supporting extreme fire behavior, should a fire occur.) Many municipalities outside of DNR protection followed our lead and suspended outdoor burning, and even campfires in some cases, during this time of heightened fire danger. The end of May, traditionally a time of reprieve, resulted in the movement of DNR fire control equipment and personnel to assist with suppression efforts in Michigan.

As of mid-June, more than 825 wildfires have burned more than 1,420 acres since the first fire burned on January 7, 2012. Fire departments assisted with suppression efforts and structure protection on two-thirds of these fires. Twenty two structures have burned and another 243 have been threatened. The main causes of fires have been debris burning (27%), equipment (17%) and power lines (10%). And it's not over yet. Fires are still occurring and vegetation is showing signs of drought in parts of the state. For more information, contact [Trent Marty](#), Bureau of Forest Protection Director, at 608-266-7978.

Draft plan for Gov. Knowles State Forest

Your review and comments on the Governor Knowles State Forest draft master plan welcomed by July 13 deadline.

The Draft Master Plan and Environmental Analysis for the [Governor Knowles State Forest](#) is available for review, and comments on the draft plan are due by July 13, 2012. The plan, designed to guide activity on the forest for the next 15 years, addresses forest management, recreation and boundary expansion areas for consideration as part of sustainable forestry. Proposals include improving and lengthening the trail system on the property for hiking, horseback riding and cross country skiing, upgrades to an existing 32-mile snowmobile trail, a new group equestrian campground and improvements to existing campgrounds, including the addition of electricity and showers. This state forest is long and narrow, with most of the 55-mile length lying along the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The forest contains a diverse group of natural communities and habitats and is also a popular destination for those who come to enjoy the St. Croix River. The draft plan, as well as an online comment form, can be found at http://dnr.wi.gov/master_planning/govknowles/. Comments are also welcomed by email or regular mail to [Bob Dall](#), State Forest Associate, Wisconsin DNR, 107 Sutliff Avenue, Rhinelander, WI 54501.

Division begins education and outreach planning

Division aligning education and outreach with strategic direction.

The Division's Strategic Direction includes a commitment to create an Education and Outreach Strategic Plan. This plan will guide how programs use the crucial components of education and outreach to implement forestry's Strategic Direction in the districts and the bureaus. The main goals of the Education and Outreach Strategic Plan are:

- to ensure that the division's messages are cohesive and delivered in an effective, efficient, integrated, and coordinated way across division programs, and
- to ensure that the division's education and outreach work is in line with and helps implement the division's Strategic Direction.

The project teams started this month with an informal assessment of the Division's education and outreach work. The assessment includes an inventory of what we do, the tools and resources we use to do it, who we partner with, target audiences and results.

We will be asking partners for feedback and to tell us about their own target audiences, strengths and roles with regard to forestry education and outreach. This information will help us plan for better collaboration in the future. For more information or to become involved, contact Project Manager [Colleen Robinson Klug](#) at 608-266-2172.

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