
Wisconsin Forestry Notes

March 2012

Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry

Two federal grant programs have upcoming deadlines.

Forest Legacy Grant Applications Due April 16

Landowners who have environmentally valuable forestland and are interested in pursuing opportunities to protect their property through the [Forest Legacy Program](#) are invited to submit a grant application by the April 16 deadline. The Forest Legacy Program is a federal land acquisition program which grants funds to States to protect environmentally important forestland from conversion to non-forest uses.

Wisconsin's aim is to use the grant funds to protect large blocks of forestland with conservation easements that focus on the sustainable use of forest resources. Wisconsin's Forest Legacy program also helps provide more public access to forest lands for hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and other outdoor pursuits. Another focus is to keep forest land producing forest products which are important for Wisconsin's economy.

To be eligible, landowners must be in one of the [State's Forest Legacy Areas](#) and be willing to obtain a Forest Stewardship Plan for the property. The property must be 75% forested or have additional trees planted to meet this requirement. For more information and application materials, contact Forest Legacy Coordinator [Nicole Potvin](#) at (608)266-2388.

Community Forest Grant Deadline: May 15

The Forest Service Community Forest Program provides grants to local governments, non-profits and tribes for community forests that establish continuing and accessible community benefits. Total nation wide funding for the program is \$3.15 million and individual grants may not exceed \$400,000. This program requires a 50% non-federal cost-share match. Additional information can be found [online](#). Applications are due to [Nicole Potvin](#) by May 15.

Division personnel earn kudos from the legislature for protecting Wisconsin's treasured forest resources.

Legislature Recognizes Division

On Feb 16 a [joint resolution](#) commending the DNR Division of Forestry and Emergency Response Crews was brought to the floor of the state assembly. It was adopted unanimously by the Assembly and referred to the Senate. Representatives Fred Clark and Jeff Mursau were among the many co-sponsors of the resolution in both chambers. The resolution commended Division of Forestry personnel for their dedication to protecting the forests of Wisconsin for future generations. It noted the Division's commitment to continually improving its fire suppression equipment, incorporating state-of-the-art telecommunication systems, educating the public about fire prevention, and training staff on modern wildland fire fighting techniques.

Preparations underway for spring fire season

DNR Streamlines Burning Permits

Spring fire season is nearly upon us and with minimal snow cover in the southern portion of the state, fire management officials are preparing for an early start. Small changes will be occurring to Emergency Fire Wardens (EFW) who historically issued hand-written burning permits to customers wishing to burn vegetative materials on the ground or in burn barrels. By the end of 2012, the Division will eliminate most EFWs who issue burn permits from private residences. Permits will continue to be issued by EFW business locations, at DNR Service Centers or Ranger Stations, and over the phone or online. Visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/> (keyword "burn") for information on DNR's burning permits and the current fire danger.

Division of Forestry Developing Business Plans

Affected stakeholders will be invited to help Division develop business plans.

The Division recently initiated a process to work with partners to produce program business plans that will identify the specific outcomes the Division will produce to meet the intent of the [Strategic Direction](#). Affected partners and customers will be invited to participate in parts or all of this effort. Examples include:

- Working with industry partners to help us to determine the areas of focus for our enhanced Forest Product Services (formerly Utilization & Marketing) program;
- Identifying specific targets for implementing sustainable harvests on state forests and other state lands tied to annual allowable harvest levels identified in property master plans; and
- Working with our urban forestry partners to help us to describe how we will implement our new emphasis on canopy cover.

The most efficient way to develop a business plan to guide implementation of DNR Forestry's Strategic Direction is to work on the various Division programs individually. This approach recognizes the different levels of complexity, uncertainty, level of change and variation in the interested parties each Division program. For example, the Forest Health program is implementing a program direction that has been in place for several years; the degree of change is small. On the other hand, Forest Product Services has a diverse group of stakeholders and a broad direction that needs to be clearly defined with respect to use of increased investment. It is therefore anticipated that the development of the Forest Product Services component of the business plan will involve more people and more time than Forest Health. Prior to finalization, business plans will be presented to the [Council on Forestry](#) for final review. All business plans are scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2012.

Amendments Proposed for Landowner Grant Program

Comments sought on the economic impact of changes to landowner grant program

Proposed revisions for the Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program (WFLGP) would streamline administration and more efficiently use the funds. The rule revision also proposes a new Weed Management Area Private Forest Grant Program (WMA-PFGP), allowing groups who are interested in controlling invasive plants on non-industrial private forest land to receive cost-sharing grants. The proposed rule and fiscal estimate is [online](#).

There will be an opportunity to comment on the revision or creation of the rule language later. Right now, however, DNR invites comments on this question: Would you, your business, your organization, or your local unit of government be affected in a material economic way if WFLGP was clarified and a new cost-share grant program was developed for controlling invasive plants in WMAs?

If you expect to be affected economically by this rule proposal please provide as much information as possible and submit your comments by March 14, 2012 (with your name, affiliation and contact information) to: Courtney LeClair, ER/6, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921 or courtney.leclair@wisconsin.gov.

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