

Public Comment Synopsis for

Division of Forestry's Strategic Direction Version 1

In mid-September, the first version of the DNR Division of Forestry's Strategic Direction was released. The Division's Strategic Direction states what the Division's niche and role will be over the next five years. It explains how the Division is going to address the goals and strategies in the [Statewide Forest Strategy](#).

The first step in developing a Strategic Direction for the Division was to ask: "What are the possible roles the Division could take to address the strategies in the Statewide Forest Strategy?" The results of this question are in Version 1. It contains a list of possible actions developed by the Division's Forestry Leadership Team (FLT). It does not state exactly what the Division will do, and at what level; it is not a statement of commitment. It does, however, describe where we think the Division has a role.

We asked partners, the public and Department staff in mid-September to comment on Version 1; specifically, they were asked to identify those actions they believed the Division of Forestry does/should have a role in (Yes or No) and whether that action should be a high, medium or low priority for the Division? These comments were used by FLT in discussions about how to best invest resources to protect and sustainably manage Wisconsin's forests for the next five years and beyond. There were a total of 55 partners, citizens, and staff that commented on Version 1. Of those, 45 answered the two specific questions explained above. This was not a vote; rather it provides information about the relative amount of support for a given strategy or action.

Version 1 described both strategies the Division could have a role in and possible actions the Division could take to address the strategies. Below are the eleven strategies that had the highest number of respondents answering "yes" to the question: Does the Division have a role in this strategy? Although there is overall support for these strategies, there are actions within them that received neither strong support nor consistent opinion about their relative priority. At times, there were many individuals who said yes and many that said no, the Division does not have a role. In only a couple instances did the majority of respondents say "no. Actions that did not have much support from partners and staff helped inform the Division's discussion on roles.

Strategy 8: Encourage a tax structure that favors well managed forests.

Strategy 22: Strive to prevent infestations of invasive species before they arrive.

Strategy 23: Work to detect new infestations early and respond rapidly to minimize impacts to forests. This strategy and all the actions within it had the highest level of support as compared to all other strategies.

Strategy 24: Control and management of existing infestations.

Strategy 39: Build public understanding about the benefits provided from investing in forest conservation.

Strategy 40: Support existing forest products companies so that they are competitive domestically and internationally.

Strategy 41: Encourage the development of new markets and companies that leverage sustainable (e.g. third-party certified) supply and ecosystem services in emerging markets.

Strategy 42: Develop collaborations and partnerships to engage all forestry stakeholders.

Strategy 48: Improve safety for the forest-based workforce and forest users.

Strategy 49: Provide for early detection and rapid initial attack for all forest fires within the state.

Strategy 51: Protect the public and natural resource from unlawful practices.

After reviewing the comments and input from Version I, the Division began to develop more specific proposals for how our programs could address the most important strategies. The result is the DRAFT Strategic Direction. The Division has proposed to maintain or increase investments in each of the strategies that the majority of respondents supported. For instance, the Division is proposing increasing investment in the utilization and marketing program in order to “Support existing forest products companies so that they are competitive domestically and internationally,” (Strategy 40) and “Encourage the development of new markets and companies that leverage sustainable (e.g. third-party certified) supply and ecosystem services in emerging markets” (Strategy 41).

To see how each of the Division’s programs is addressing different strategies, see the appendix in the DRAFT. It contains a table of all the strategies and which programs work to achieve each strategy.