Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines DNR PUB-FR-226 2018



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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AUGUST. 2018

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Wisconsin Division of Forestry would like to thank the many partners and staff whose energy and dedication helped to make this document the best that it can be. The Wisconsin Division of Forestry would also like to recognize the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for their pioneering work in the development of voluntary site level guidelines and Dr. John Kotar for his work to provide the tools needed to constantly improve the quality of the forest management in Wisconsin. Their work was relied upon in the first edition of Wisconsin's Forest Management Guidelines (FMG) and continues to be a corner stone of this edition.

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We would also like to extend our sincerest thanks to all of the external reviewers and commenters who contributed to the review effort through the public review process. Your input was extremely valuable to bringing these guidelines up the highest possible level. While not all suggestions could be incorporated within this revision, the effort was made to include all appropriate suggestions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

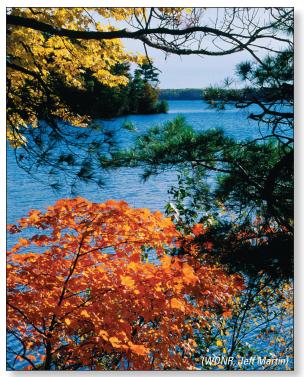
Acknowledgments	ii
Table of Contents	iii
PURPOSE	
The Purpose of Integrated Guidelines	vii
The Concept of Integrated Guidelines	
Factors that May Affect Implementation	
What the Guidelines Are	
What the Guidelines Are Not	
CHAPTER 1 - WISCONSIN'S FORESTS: A QUICK OVE	D\/IE\M
A Statewide Snapshot of Wisconsin's Forests	
A Brief History of Wisconsin's Forests	
, and the second	
CHAPTER 2 - GENERALLY ACCEPTED SILVICULTURA	
Sustainable Forestry	
Landowner Goals and Objectives	
Site Evaluation and Stand Delineation	
Silvicultural Systems Overview	
Even-aged Silvicultural Systems	
Uneven-aged Silvicultural Systems	
Passive or Non-management Options	
Silvicultural Systems Summary	
Salvage Harvests	
Unsustainable Harvest Methods	
Management Prescriptions	
Resources for Additional Information	2-3/
CHAPTER 3 - WILDLIFE HABITAT AND BIODIVERSIT	
Specific Wildlife Habitat Guidelines	
Resources for Additional Information	3-24
CHAPTER 4 - VISUAL QUALITY	
The Value of Visual Quality	
Visual Sensitivity Levels	
Resource for Additional Information	4-9
CHAPTER 5 - RIPARIAN AREAS AND WETLANDS	
The Value of Riparian Areas	
Riparian Management Zones	
BMPs for Riparian Management Zones	
Wetlands	
Resources for Additional Information	5-15
CHAPTER 6 - CULTURAL RESOURCES	
Cultural Resources	
Resources for Additional Information	6-7

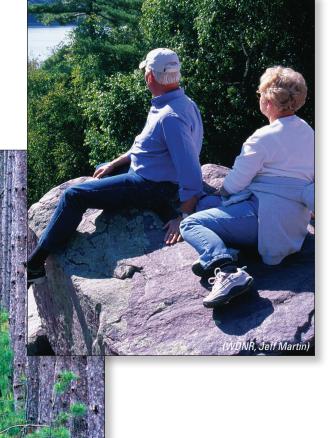
CHAPTER 7 - FOREST SOIL PRODUCTIVITY	
The Value of Forest Soil Productivity	
Soil Characteristics and Potential Impacts	
Applying Guidelines to Varying Site Conditions	7-12
CHAPTER 8 - THREATS TO FOREST HEALTH	
What are Threats to Forest Health?	8-2
What are Invasive Species?	8-3
Invasive Species are a Threat to Forests	8-4
Invasive Species and Forest Management	
Elements of Invasive Species Management	
Forestry BMPs for Invasive Species	
Management of Select Forest Pests and Diseases	
Resources for Additional Information	8-19
CHAPTER 9 - ECONOMICS	
Balancing Economic Considerations and Other Forest Values	
Basic Forest Management and Economics: Three Things Every Forest Landowner Should Know	
Advanced Forest Economics: An Investment Analysis Primer	
Tax and Record-keeping Considerations	
Resources for Additional Information	9-23
CHAPTER 10 - FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANNING	
Forest Management Planning	10-2
CHAPTER 11 - GENERAL OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES	
Operational Considerations	11-2
Protecting Cultural Resources	
Fuels, Lubricants, Waste, and Spills	
Post-operational Activities	11-7
BMPs: Operational Activities	11-9
CHAPTER 12 - FOREST ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENA	ANCE
Upland Forest Roads	
Stream Crossing Design and Construction	12-6
Road Construction and Drainage	12-10
Drainage Structures	
Soil Stabilization	
Wetland Forest Roads	
Federal Requirements for Forest Roads in Wetlands	
Road Maintenance	12-21
CHAPTER 13 - TIMBER HARVESTING	
Planning and Design Considerations	
Operational Considerations	
Post-operational Activities	
Resources for Additional Information	13-29

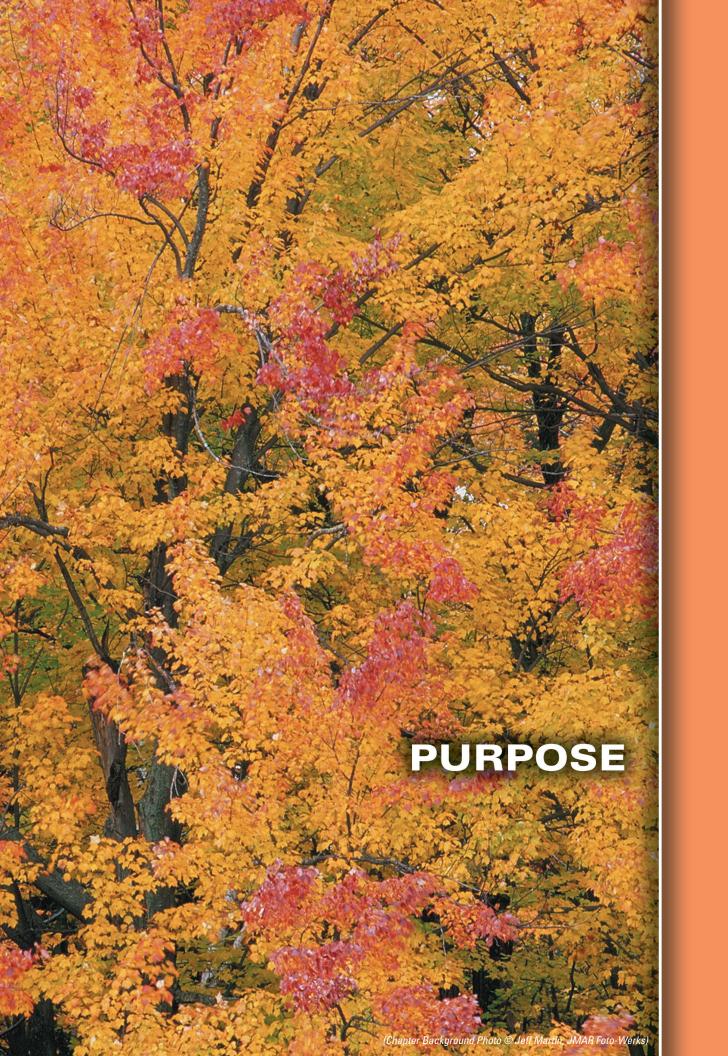
CHAPTER 14 - PESTICIDE USE	
Planning	14-3
Operational Considerations	14-6
Post-operational Activities	14-11
Forest Certification	14-12
Resources for Additional Information	14-13
CHAPTER 15 - REFORESTATION AND AFFORESTATION	J
Planning and Design	
Operational Considerations	
Post-operational Activities	
Resources for Additional Information	
CHAPTER 16 - INTERMEDIATE SILVICULTURAL TREAT	MENTS
Planning	
Operational Considerations	
Post-operational Activities	
Resources for Additional Information	
CHAPTER 17 - FIRE MANAGEMENT	
PART I: WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT	
PART II: PRESCRIBED FIRE MANAGEMENT	
Planning and Design	17-5
Operational Considerations	17-8
Post-operational Activities	
Resources for Additional Information	
CHAPTER 18 - FOREST RECREATION MANAGEMENT	
Planning and Design	
Operational Considerations	
Resources for Additional Information	
APPENDICES	
Tree Marking and Retention Guidelines	Appendix A
Sample Timber Sale Contract	
Forest Certification	
Regulations Relating to Forest Management	
Permits	
Cited References	
Resource Directory	
Glossary	











THE PURPOSE OF INTEGRATED GUIDELINES

How these Guidelines are Organized

Because these guidelines have been designed for a variety of audiences, some landowners may find it to be more technical than they need, while some resource managers may find it to be more basic than they might prefer. Some readers will be more interested in an overall understanding of "why" a particular resource (forests, wildlife, water, soils, visual quality, or cultural resources) is important relative to overall sustainability, and "why" particular strategies are employed in their management. Other readers will be more interested in "how to" implement a particular activity or practice needed to carry out a management strategy. They would like to know, for example, "how to" construct a forest road, or develop a forest management plan, or design and administer a timber harvest.

Part one of the guide – Chapters 1 through 9 – is designed to address the "whys" of each of a number of important resource components. Why do the forests of Wisconsin look like they do – how are they changing? Why are various timber stands harvested differently? What are the key issues related to wildlife management and the protection of water resources, riparian areas, soils, and cultural resources? Why is visual quality an important resource consideration, and what trade-offs need to be considered? Why are economic considerations an important component of the forest management decision-making process?

Part two of the guide – Chapters 10 through 18 – focuses on the "how" of specific activities that are normally carried out in the management of a forest. It begins with the development of a well-considered, ecologically-based forest management plan, and then presents integrated guidelines related to a number of "on-the-ground" activities necessary to carry out such a plan.

Obviously there is linkage between "why" and "how" a resource is managed. The management of any one resource also impacts others. The implementation of any one specific management activity must be considered from many perspectives. Readers are encouraged to explore the entire guide in order to gain a more complete understanding of any particular plan of action before proceeding.

Part three of the guide contains additional resources ranging from a glossary of terms to a list of additional resources and sources of assistance.



Figure A: Autumn in northern Wisconsin shows the diversity found in a mixed conifer and hardwood forested landscape.

• IMPORTANT NOTE •

The WISCONSIN'S FORESTRY BEST

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR WATER QUALITY

(WQ-BMPs) FIELD MANUAL has been incorporated into and is found throughout this guide.

WQ-BMPs are identified by the "\underwrightarrow" symbol.

The WISCONSIN'S FORESTRY
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR INVASIVE
SPECIES (IS-BMPs) FIELD MANUAL has

been incorporated into and is found throughout this quide. IS-BMPs are identified by the " " symbol.

THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATED GUIDELINES





Figures B and C: Sustaining forest resources for future generations depends on balancing a diversity of social, economic and environmental objectives, including production of timber for wood and paper products.

Sustainability means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable forestry is a proactive form of management that provides for the multiple uses of the forest by balancing a diversity of both present and future needs. It is a process of informed decision-making that takes into account resource needs, landowner objectives, site capabilities, existing regulations, economics, and the best information available at any given time.

Those concerned about forest management have long recognized the challenge of balancing social, economic and environmental objectives and implications. They also recognize the complex relationship between forest management practices and the long-term sustainability of our forests.

Integrated resource management approaches, comprehensive planning, and recommended practices and guidelines are not new ideas. The first edition of this publication introduced:

- The concept of one set of integrated guidelines to support the sustainability of many different resources within forest communities.
- The recognition that guidelines should be designed to accommodate a wide range of resource needs, landowner objectives, and site conditions.
- The idea of a broad-based, collaborative approach to developing user-friendly guidelines applicable to forests throughout Wisconsin.

This edition provides updates to the existing guidelines and adds newly developed guidelines such as the Wisconsin's Best Management Practices for Invasive Species.

This concept of integrated guidelines recognizes the forest as a community of related resources, rather than a collection of separate resources. Integrated guidelines reflect the forest ecosystem that they are designed to help sustain.

Who Will Use the Guidelines?

These forest management guidelines have been developed for use by forest landowners, resource managers, loggers, contractors, and equipment operators, who share a concern for balancing forest management activities and the long-term sustainability of forest resources. Although many individuals may participate in managing a particular site, final decisions regarding guideline implementation lie with the landowner.

These guidelines were designed to help landowners, resource managers, and loggers determine how to protect the functions and values of forest resources during forest management activities. They do not provide advice on whether to manage or which management activities are needed.

FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT IMPLEMENTATION

Generally speaking, these guidelines are informational and voluntary. They are designed to help landowners and resource managers meet today's needs while also maintaining ecosystem integrity and productivity for future generations. Any federal, state and local regulations, however, whether or not referenced by these guidelines (such as endangered species laws, pesticide rules, permitting requirements, zoning ordinances, etc.), take precedence and must be observed. Landowners voluntarily participating in formal incentive programs such as Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program or the Managed Forest Law are obliged to comply with the statutes and rules that apply – some of which are reflected in these guidelines.

These guidelines have special significance to anyone carrying out a forestry operation in Wisconsin. State law provides that forestry operations which are carried out in accordance with "generally accepted forestry management practices" may not be prohibited by city, village, town or county ordinances or regulations. The law further defines "generally accepted forestry management practices" to be forestry management practices that promote sound management of a forest including practices contained in the most recent version of this publication (DNR PUB-FR-226 2018 Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines).

Parts of these guidelines also have special significance to private consulting foresters, and industrial forest products companies that voluntarily participate in Wisconsin's Cooperating Forester Program. Section NR 1.213 (3)b, Wisconsin Administrative Code, provides that a cooperating forester "shall manage private lands where the cooperator provides service in a manner which maintains the long-term capacity of the land to provide forest products, uses and values desired by landowners in accordance with the silvicultural guidelines in department handbooks and directives or a written, science-based forest management commitment submitted to and approved by the department in advance." For purposes of administering the Cooperating Forester Program, compliance with the following sections of these guidelines is considered mandatory:

 Generally Accepted Regeneration Methods by Cover Type found in Table 2-1, Chapter 2, page 2-32, unless the Wisconsin DNR has approved an exception described in a science-based forest management commitment submitted by the cooperator. The regeneration methods designated in the table have been substantiated by forestry research, and have been found to be reliable techniques for manipulating forest vegetation with predictable results. Since our understanding of forest ecology and silvics is constantly evolving, the management commitment option allows the adoption of new techniques as they are proven.

- Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality (WQ-BMPs), designated by the symbol "♠" found throughout these guidelines.

 Wisconsin WQ-BMPs identify and explain guidelines for landowners, loggers and land managers to protect water quality. They were prepared in response to federal legislation. Section 208 of the 1977 Clean Water Act requires each state to develop plans and procedures to control "silviculturally related nonpoint sources of pollution ... to the extent feasible." Section 319 of the 1987 Water Quality Act requires each state to develop and implement a program to reduce nonpoint source pollution to the "maximum extent practicable." Compliance with Wisconsin WQ-BMPs will help meet our federal obligations.
- Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Invasive Species (IS-BMPs), designated by the symbol " " found throughout these guidelines.
 The IS-BMPs identify and explain guidelines for foresters, landowners and loggers to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive plants, insects and diseases. They were developed for the Wisconsin Council on Forestry as voluntary guidelines.
 Implementation may become mandatory as the language is used in contracts; however, the field guidelines are written to be flexible and recognizes the need for setting reasonable expectations and realistic goals.

Cooperating foresters must also abide by federal, state and local regulations, including those related to forest incentive programs administered by the Wisconsin DNR. Implementation of other information presented in these guidelines is encouraged, but not mandatory.

WHAT THE GUIDELINES ARE

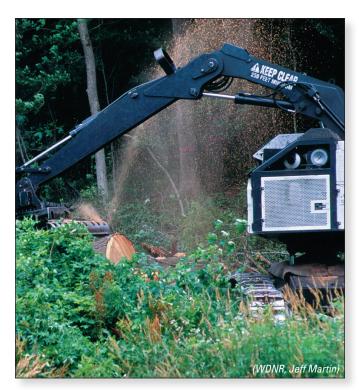


Figure D: Harvesting timber stands can contribute to the long-term health, productivity and sustainability of valuable forest resources.

- The guidelines are designed to be flexible, recognizing that both site conditions and landowner objectives vary. Determining the most appropriate guidelines for implementation on a particular site depends on the informed judgment of the landowner, resource manager or logger responsible for that site.
- It may be possible to implement several guidelines simultaneously in some instances. For example, trees left to protect cultural resources may also satisfy mast guidelines for wildlife, as well as apparent harvest size guidelines for visual quality.
- Implementation of the guidelines is voluntary, except where noted.

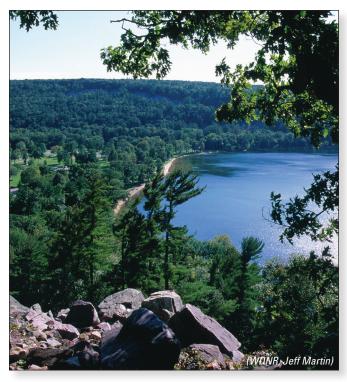


Figure E: Integrated guidelines recognize the forest as a community of related resources, rather than a collection of separate resources.

- The guidelines are designed to help forest landowners, resource managers and loggers meet two goals:
 - Conduct forest management activities while addressing continued long-term sustainability of diverse forest resources.
 - Promote or enhance the functions and values of water and soil resources, riparian areas, wildlife habitat, visual quality, and cultural resources.
- The guidelines represent practical, sound and generally-accepted practices based on the best available scientific information.
- The guidelines are designed to assist with site-level forest management once the landowner has decided to manage the site for forests. They are not designed to provide broad-based landscape directions but do recognize the importance of landscape-level considerations and planning and provide references to landscape-level tools (e.g., Ecological Landscape Handbook, Wildlife Action Plan).

WHAT THE GUIDELINES ARE NOT



Figure F: Professional natural resource managers and educators like these are available across the state to assist landowners in the sustainable management of their forests. Contact your local Wisconsin DNR office for a copy of the Directory of Foresters, and see the Resource Directory in this guide for additional sources of information.

- The guidelines are not a substitute for a resource management plan. They are intended to support implementation of a plan once it is in place.
- The guidelines are not intended to replace any existing rules or regulations.
- The guidelines are not intended as a substitute for obtaining professional assistance as needed to achieve management objectives, or meet appropriate engineering standards. They are guidelines – not construction standards or engineering specifications.
- The guidelines are not designed to help determine whether a particular forest management activity should or should not occur. They are designed, instead, to provide guidance in how to implement a particular forest management activity.

- The guidelines are not intended to address all forest management activities and all forest resources. They address major forest management activities as they relate to selected components of a healthy forest.
- The guidelines do not address landscape scale considerations and issues. Landscape-level considerations and planning are recognized as important, but they are beyond the scope of these guidelines. References to landscape scale tools are provided for those that would like more information.



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES NOTICE OF FINAL GUIDANCE & CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to ch. 227, Wis. Stats., the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has finalized and hereby certifies the following guidance document.

DOCUMENT ID

FA-20-0005

DOCUMENT TITLE

Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines

PROGRAM/BUREAU

Forest Economics and Ecology, Applied Forestry Bureau

STATUTORY AUTHORITY OR LEGAL CITATION

S. 823.075, Wis. Stats. & NR 1.25, Wis. Admin. Code

DATE SENT TO LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU (FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS)

2/10/2020

DATE FINALIZED

4/6/2020

DNR CERTIFICATION

I have reviewed this guidance document or proposed guidance document and I certify that it complies with sections 227.10 and 227.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is not explicitly required or explicitly permitted by a statute or a rule that has been lawfully promulgated. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is more restrictive than a standard, requirement, or threshold contained in the Wisconsin Statutes.

Carmer Harden
March 27, 2020

Signature Date