



WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON FORESTRY

Tony Evers, Governor

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Richard Wedepohl
Madison

Ken Zabel
Janesville

January 8, 2019

Co-Chairs, Wisconsin Joint Committee on Finance:

Honorable Senator Alberta Darling

Honorable Representative John Nygren

Room 317 East

Room 309 East

State Capitol

State Capitol

Madison, WI 53707-7882

P.O. Box 8953

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Regarding: Forestry Account Audit

Senator Darling and Representative Nygren,

Identifying needs essential to maintaining Wisconsin's significant forest products industry while ensuring Wisconsin's forests remain healthy and growing is an integral part of moving our state forward as leaders in sustainable forest management. Wisconsin's Council on Forestry (COF) is committed to working with Wisconsin's legislature and governor to ensure a secure, segregated source of funding for Wisconsin's forestry programs is in place to meet current and future needs.

COF appreciates the support Wisconsin's Joint Committee on Finance has given to Wisconsin's forests and forest products industry. COF was established in 2002 under Chapter 26.02 to advise the governor, legislature, the Department of Natural Resources and other state agencies on topics affecting Wisconsin's forests and forest products industries.

- Wisconsin's 17.2 million acres of forestlands and millions of urban trees significantly enhance the quality of life in our state.
- There are over 60,000 jobs in Wisconsin directly related to forestry. Forestry is the number one employer in ten counties and every job in forestry supports 1.7 additional jobs in the state.
- Forestry is a \$24 billion industry in Wisconsin. Every million dollars of output in forestry creates \$721,000 of output in other sectors.
- Managed forests support a wide variety of recreational opportunities, enhancing local economies and our quality of life in Wisconsin.

As you know, the Legislative Audit Bureau released the forestry account audit results in August of 2018. In October COF began review of audit results. Overall the audit found expenditures to be appropriate which supports the need for continued investment in management of this resource.

COF looks forward to engaging with Wisconsin's newly appointed Joint Committee on Finance as they deliberate Wisconsin's next biennial budget. If COF can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us

Respectfully,

Henry Schienebeck, Chair
Wisconsin Council on Forestry