

Wisconsin Forest Practices Study - Request for Proposal 2.0 **September 2014**

1. Background

Forest policies in Wisconsin have been evolving rapidly in recent decades. There has been much discussion and debate regarding effects that changing policies have on current forest-based operations and potential future growth in Wisconsin's forest products industry. Information gaps exist regarding the costs and benefits of forest policies, regulations and guidelines in Wisconsin. Addressing these information gaps through a well-focused forest practices study will serve to establish a credible research information data base for addressing identified issues and concerns.

Pursuant to s. 26.105(1), Wis. Stats., the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has awarded a grant to conduct the Wisconsin Forest Practices Study (WFPS) to the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association (GLTPA) and Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA). The WFPS Plan is posted at <http://study.wisconsinforestry.org>.

Consistent with the WFPS Plan, GLTPA and WCFA are requesting proposals for research on a priority topic selected in consultation with the Wisconsin Council on Forestry. This solicitation describes the priority research topic that is the focus of this RFP; procedures and guidelines for submitting proposals; and the criteria to be used in evaluating and selecting proposals for funding. Questions about this solicitation should be directed to Fred Souba, WFPS Project Manager, at 715/213-4833; email fred@provisionforestry.com.

2. Priority Research Topic for This Solicitation

Topic: This RFP is soliciting proposals that will address all of the following questions related to the economic costs and ecological consequences of selected timber harvesting restrictions in Wisconsin.

1. *What is the scope of selected timber harvesting restrictions in Wisconsin, and the potential for the restrictions to shift forest harvesting from summer to winter months?*

Forest management and timber harvest in Wisconsin are conducted in context of a complex array of policies, regulations and guidelines. We are seeking proposals for research to: 1) identify the scope of selected harvesting restrictions in Wisconsin in terms of specific geographic areas, soil types, and forest types / stand conditions affected, and times of year that the restrictions have impacts; 2) describe how the selected restrictions individually and cumulatively affect forest harvesting operations and result in shifts in season of harvest; 3) characterize how effects of the selected harvesting restrictions differ among regions of the state, soils, times of year, and forest types / stand conditions; and 4) develop geographic information system layers or maps describing counties affected by the restrictions. Restrictions of particular interest that should be addressed in the proposal include those related to: oak wilt, state-listed and/or G1/G2 species, invasive species, leaf-off restrictions, and annosum root rot. The proposal should identify and address 3 – 5 state listed species and/or G1/G2 species and 3 – 5 invasive species that have the greatest potential to affect forest harvesting operations in Wisconsin. An example of a leaf-off restriction would be the requirement to defer harvest of aspen stands after leaf fall.

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2. What are the economic consequences of the timber harvesting restrictions identified in question 1?

The proposal should describe how the investigators will estimate the economic consequences associated with all of the restrictions identified in question 1. Economic consequences such as marginal costs should be estimated for each restriction individually and for cases where the restrictions have the potential to interact. Elements of successful proposals may include (i) case studies focused on selected parcels where forest managers and loggers are willing to share information that researchers need to estimate economic consequences attributable to the restrictions identified in question 1 and (ii) a procedure for assessing the relevance of case studies to a well-defined population of forest stands and / or timber sales in Wisconsin. Economic consequences, and potential risks, should be allocated as explicitly as possible among landowners, loggers, and wood buyers potentially by conducting a survey of individuals involved in the wood supply chain or using some other appropriate methodology. An evaluation of the potential for economic consequences and risks to accrue outside the supply chain or into the future also may be warranted.

3. What are the ecological consequences of the timber harvesting restrictions identified in question 1?

Respondents to the RFP should propose characterizing documented ecological consequences of all of the restrictions identified in question 1. Those consequences should include documented near-term (e.g. few years) and long-term (e.g. decades) effects on (i) forest structure and composition, (ii) indicators of forest health such as risk of disease, (iii) aspects of wildlife habitat and biodiversity, (iv) soil / site productivity, and (v) water quality. Elements of successful proposals may include (i) review and synthesis of the scientific literature and (ii) stand- and/or landscape-level modeling that supports quantitative estimates of ecological consequences attributable to the restrictions identified in question 1.

3. Proposal Submittal and Selection Process

Any research organization, consultant, or individual is eligible to compete for funding under this solicitation.

Research proposals must be received on or before November 15, 2014. Proposals should be submitted electronically as PDF files to Mr. Fred Souba, WFPS Project Manager, 4321 Ridgeview Lane, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494-6751 or fred@provisionforestry.com

Proposals must include the following main headings:

1. Project Title
2. Primary Investigator - name, affiliation, title, address, phone number, e-mail address
3. Collaborators - name, affiliation, title, address, phone number, e-mail address
4. Literature Review
5. Statement of Objectives
6. Detailed Description of Methods
7. Description of Deliverables
8. Value of Information to be Produced
9. Schedule, Milestones, and Measures of Success

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10. Budget - show resources required in the following categories: salary, benefits, travel, equipment and supplies, indirect costs (i.e., overhead charges) and other.
11. Proposed Funding Sources - show amount of funding requested from WFPS and amounts to be obtained from other sources. In-kind contributions (e.g., donations of material and labor) are acceptable sources of cost share provided realistic dollar values are assigned to such contributions. Sunk costs (e.g., value of previous research) cannot be used for cost share.

Proposals must not exceed ten pages (single-sided). Investigators' and collaborators' qualifications should be described in an attachment to the proposal that includes citations of investigators' and collaborators' publications and reports that are most directly related to the proposed work. The description of qualifications should not exceed two pages in length. Please do not attach resumes, publications, or publication lists. Letters of support from potential co-funders and collaborators may be attached to proposals. No other attachments or supporting materials are permitted.

It is expected that one proposal will be selected for negotiation and potential funding by December 15, 2014. In evaluating proposals and making selections, review panels will use the following technical criteria: (1) relevance of proposal to the priority research topics identified in section 2 of this solicitation, (2) clarity of objectives, (3) general scientific and technical quality, (4) probability of achieving objectives within the proposed schedule and budget, and (5) expected value of information to be produced relative to cost. Review panels will give favorable consideration to match or cost share or co-funding when evaluating proposals with respect to criterion (5).

Authors of proposals selected for negotiation and potential funding will be contacted by the WFPS Project Manager in late December 2014. The Project Manager may request changes or clarifications in a proposal based on review comments or budget considerations. Negotiations leading to funding decisions and research agreements will be completed as quickly as possible. Final payment will be withheld until the final report has been received and reviewed.

Guidelines for Proposal Authors

- All proposals: Indirect costs (i.e., overhead charges) should not exceed 10% of direct costs funded by WFPS.
- Total funding requested from WFPS should not exceed \$100,000. Project duration should not exceed one year. Deliverables must include detailed quarterly progress reports and a final report.