

## **Heather Berklund**

Represents: *Chief State Forester*

Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forestry

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Heather Berklund was announced the new chief state forester in Oct. 2020, but is not a stranger to WI DNR Division of Forestry, where she has worked since 2000. She has spent the bulk of her early field career as a field forester across northern WI, managing the diverse public lands, tax law program, fire suppression, education and outreach, and private landowner programs. She worked up the ranks as a field team supervisor and Area Leader for several years, then most recently prior to her chief role she spent 3 years as the Deputy Division Administer for Field Operations, overseeing statewide policies for bureau and field staff. Recently since her new administrator position, her focus has been on supporting staff and partners during the pandemic, coordinating climate initiatives, including Wisconsin's Trillion Tree Pledge, building and maintaining relationships within the forestry community, partnering on federal funding opportunities for our forest products industry, as well as working to create a cultural foundation within the division and department that embraces and supports diversity and an inclusive working environment and workforce development for current and future staff and partners.

Heather grew up in the Driftless Area of WI, where her family still owns 120 acres that she enjoys exploring. She has resided in northern WI within the Minocqua area since 2002, where you can find her and her family (husband is a DNR forester and 2 kids in middle and high school) enjoying the diverse outdoor recreation opportunities for all seasons, making maple syrup, and trying to grow a more productive garden!

Her favorite parts of the job have been the people she has worked with in the forest industry and landowners she has met along the way. She believes in maintaining strong partnerships across our forestry community in order to ensure we have a healthy, robust forested landscape and industry for future generations. In addition, as the first female to hold this position, she hopes to work within the forestry community to help diversify, energize, and educate youth and adults on forestry career paths as well as all the important benefits we receive from trees!