



Operating Structure and Governance

October 2025

Project Collaborators

WI Council on Forestry

The WI Council on Forestry is engaged through membership on the Executive Committee and Steering Committee, and ultimately responsible for submitting the final project report and actionable recommendations to the state legislature. The Council on Forestry provides an opportunity for Council members and represented stakeholder groups to be involved in the project as it progresses. Council members are a valuable source of expertise available through representation on the Steering Committee and continuing Council project presentations and discussion. The council on forestry shall provide a report detailing the research outcomes and recommendations to the governor and the chief clerk of each house of the legislature no later than December 31, 2027.

WI DNR

The WDNR is engaged through membership on the Council on Forestry, project Executive Committee and Steering Committee, and will play a critical role in helping facilitate data, resources, connections to stakeholders and subject experts. WDNR staff is available to offer input, considerations, and suggestions for a better understanding and informed decision-making process throughout the project.

Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association

The GLTPA is engaged through membership on the Council on Forestry and project Executive Committee. GLTPA is the primary fiscal agent for managing grant monies and communication with WDNR grant managers. Upon completion, the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association and the Wisconsin Paper Council shall provide this research and recommended plan to the Council on Forestry.

Wisconsin Paper Council

The WPC is engaged through stakeholder representation on the Council on Forestry and project Executive Committee. The WPC will work collaboratively with forest products industry producers and supply chain partners to identify challenges and help outline solutions for this grant project. WPC was co-named along with GLTPA as a grant recipient and responsible for delivery of the research and recommended plan to the Council on Forestry.

Project Manager

A project manager will coordinate and provided project oversight and communication with the Executive Committee and Steering Committee and secure project consultants and experts as needed to complete project component analysis and reports. The project manager will be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee, and along with the Steering Committee chair, manage Steering Committee functions.

Working Committees

Executive Committee

Members

- Council on Forestry Chair and the council Vice Chair
- Great Lakes Timber Professionals Executive Director (CoF member)
- Wisconsin Paper Council President and the council Director of Operations
- WDNR Chief State Forester (CoF member)
- Steering Committee Representative (Possible CoF member)
- Project Manager

Charge

The Executive Committee will operate as a group to direct the overall WI Forests FIRST project, including selecting the Project Manager (PM), overseeing the PM consulting services, approving receipt of final reports and PM payments, and overseeing grant-related documentation and related procedures. GLTPA is the fiscal agent for managing grant monies and communication with WDNR grant managers.

Decision Process

The Executive Committee will strive to reach consensus for decisions when reasonable and possible. Failing consensus, a vote will be used, with the Council, GLTPA and WPC each having one vote. Majority vote will rule. WDNR maintains a non-voting role along with the Project Manager and Steering Committee member offering input, considerations, and suggestions that may help influence the direction or decisions.

Records

Members will submit meeting notes for electronic storage. The Council Chair will prepare meeting agendas. Formal minutes will not be kept. Decisions made during Committee meetings will be reviewed and confirmed at the following meeting.

Note: The Executive Committee retains the authority to adjust all committee goals, operational procedures, members and ongoing operations in order to ensure the successful completion of the WI forest industry-wide strategic plan and roadmap project funded in Act 15, 2025 WI Biennial Budget

Steering Committee

Members

Members will be invited to join by the Executive Committee considering input from Council on Forestry members.

Steering Committee Member Expectations

- Voluntarily commit to attending and participating in virtual and possible in person meetings. Meetings will be held as needed to ensure timely project progress and may be as often as 1 per week but likely no less frequent than 1 per month for the duration of the project (24 months +/-).
- Committee members may be asked to lead smaller ad hoc working groups, comprised of forestry community stakeholders and Committee members to gather and or review information or otherwise contribute to the project.
- Committee member time in addition to meetings will be required to assist the Project Manager by providing local and industry expertise, opinions, additional sources for information, reviewing and commenting on project draft reports and otherwise contributing to help ensure that the Project Manager has what is needed to ensure the timely and successful completion of the project.
- Committee member volunteer time commitment is estimated to be 8 to 12 hours per month but may vary.

Members

1. Council on Forestry - Committee Chairs
 - Sound Forestry and Policy Committee, Dr. Adena Rissman
 - Forestry Funding Committee, Jim Hoppe
 - Forest Products Utilization Committee, Rebekah Luedtke
 - Council Profile Committee, Jim Kerkman
 - Transportation Committee, xxx
5. xxx
6. xxx
7. xxx
8. xxx
9. Xxx
10. Xxx
11. Xxx
12. Xxx
13. Xxx
14. Xxx
15. Xxx (note: final numbers and members on Steering Committee yet to be determined)

The Steering Committee includes a Committee Chair appointed by the Executive Committee. The Chair will be the point of contact for the Project Manager, sit on the Executive Committee as a non-voting member, and with the Project Manager facilitate Committee meetings and on-going business.

Charge

The Steering Committee's charge is to provide assistance to the Project Manager and general guidance on overall project component efforts. This may include review of ongoing work completed by project analysts and consultants to help ensure appropriate information is reviewed and synthesized correctly. The Committee will endeavor to be "in-house" local experts to provide a sounding board for the Project Manager.

Decision Process

The Steering Committee will strive to reach consensus for decisions when reasonable and possible and to use an approach to reach a consensus by identifying the point at which all agree. The goal would not necessarily be unanimous agreement, but to find a decision that everyone can live with and support, even if it wasn't their first choice.

Records

Agendas will be prepared for all full committee meetings and provided to the Executive Committee ahead of the meeting. A record will be kept of decisions reached regarding project details.

Committee Open Meetings Requirements

The Council on Forestry may have up to five Council members present at a meeting without opening that meeting to the public. **If six or more Council members are present, the meeting should be open to the public.** The reason for this is that six members is the minimum number that may control a Council decision. This would occur when the Council quorum of 11 is met at a meeting with 11 members, and six votes are then needed to pass or defeat a proposed action (one-half plus 1).

Since the Forest FIRST effort covers topics within the jurisdiction of the Council, these meetings meet the purpose requirement for adherence to open meetings law and should be followed. You can read more about the purpose and number requirements for open meetings in the Showers Test Section (page 9) of [Wisconsin Open Meetings Law Compliance Guide](#).

To request an Open Meetings posting:

Instructions for requesting a noticed public meeting

- Send your public notice requests to abby.widell@wisconsin.gov at least 14 business days ahead of the meeting. This will allow two days of turnaround time for to create the notices and meet the public notice outlet deadlines.
 - Please also CC amandaa.koch@wisconsin.gov in case of any unexpected absences.
- In your request, please include the following:
 - Meeting date and time (both start and end time)
 - Meeting location (full address and include room number/name)
 - If there is a virtual option, share any registration links/requirements or passcode information.
 - Provide a list of topics to be discussed (no need to include specific times/people involved).
 - Identify any action items.
 - If applicable, provide a web URL where more information on the meeting and agenda can be accessed.
 - Include name and contact information of “primary contact”, which would be the point person for any meeting related questions.
 - Provide any other relevant information or instructions (i.e., in-person meeting registration requirements).
- You can expect to be updated once the public notices have been posted or shared.