

Wisconsin Council on Forestry

U.S. Forest Service Report

September 16, 2021

General Status – Pandemic Response

Office buildings remain closed to public use but continue to provide public service virtually. Awaiting updated guidance on agency “return to work” plan. Original plan to begin a phased approach around October 1 is no longer in place with no alternative date identified at this time.

Most employees on CNNF remain in telework status, but field operations continue.

Timber Program – FY21

Planned Accomplishments

135 MMBF Sold (up to 75 MMBF of Storm Salvage)

95 MMBF Sold by Forest Service (60 MMBF Storm Salvage)

40 MMBF Sold by State of Wisconsin GNA

Current Status

Approximately 132MMBF overall sold to date. A few additional sales to be awarded as well as a GNA auction by the WDNR. On track to exceed target. CNNF appears likely to be the top timber producing national forest in the country again in FY21 (#1 5 of the last 6 years).

Salvage sales from 2019 blowdown area continue to sell with only occasional no-bids. 31 sales sold this year for an estimated volume of 55 MMBF. Total salvage sold from the storm area thus far:

271.11 MMBF (232 NF + 39.1 GNA) on 24,472 acres (21,772 NF + 2,700 GNA).

To date, 12,270 acres have been cut and accepted

Forest Health

The programmatic Environmental Assessment on Oak Wilt Management on the CNNF for 30-day public review and comment released on July 14 resulted in a number of comments to review and address. We are close to issuing a draft decision notice that will be posted publicly

and sent to commenters followed by a pre-decisional 45-day objection period. If no objections, project will be cleared. If objection(s) received, they will be addressed prior to a final decision.

Wildfire Suppression Support

The Forest Service continues to be at its highest preparedness level (5) since mid-July. This is the longest duration at that PL. AT PL 5, fire suppression is the primary priority for the agency.

Numerous permanent Fire Program Staff and fire-qualified employees from other program areas continue to support wildfire suppression efforts in Minnesota and western states.

Support needs are expected to continue through September and into October.