



Wisconsin Council on Forestry

Tony Evers, Governor
CouncilOnForestry.wi.gov

February XX, 2025

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**To: The Honorable Tony Evers, Secretary Karen Hyun, Senator Romaine Quinn,
Representative Jeff Mursau**

Subject: State Lands 2023 – 2024 Biennial Harvest Reporting

The Wisconsin Council on Forestry is submitting our report required by Statute 28.025(3)(a), created by Wisconsin Act 166 (2005), related to timber harvest levels reported to the Council by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR is required to submit to the Council, biennially, the total timber harvest on property owned by the state and under the jurisdiction of the department.

If the DNR submits a report indicating that the timber harvest in any biennium is less than 90 percent, or more than 110 percent, of the allowable timber harvest, the Council on Forestry shall prepare a report containing the reasons for noncompliance and recommendations on methods of ensuring that the timber harvest is consistent with the annual allowable timber harvest established by the DNR. The Council on Forestry shall submit the report to the governor, to the department, and to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature.

The DNR Division of Forestry recently submitted a report to the Council for the 2023-2024 fiscal years, indicating harvest levels during this period of 89 percent of the biennial harvest goal. With this measure outside of the stated 90 and 110 percent sideboards, the Council is required by statute to provide this report. **(The DNR's report can be found on the Council's website.)**

The Council's conclusion after reviewing the report is that the slight deviation from the harvest goal for the 2023–2024 biennium does not raise concerns and does not necessitate recommendations for future adjustments.

The Division of Forestry set a harvest goal of 33,664 acres for the biennium, and established 29,929 acres for harvest, after examining 38,216 acres to determine which areas were ready for harvest. Acreage determined not to be currently viable for harvesting would be due to a variety of reasons including operational considerations, market conditions, and current silvicultural forest stand conditions. These areas not ready for current harvest are often then deferred to a later date in the harvest schedule.

The Council recognizes the importance and value of planning and monitoring appropriate harvest levels on state owned forestlands to ensure management is consistent with master plans which balance social, ecological, and economic considerations and provide a sustainable harvest level that supports our state's forest industry.

The Council also recognizes that there are challenges and complexities to appropriately forecast, calculate, identify, and achieve annual or short-term harvest levels. Changing forest and market conditions must continually be accounted and adjusted for. While acreage goals for timber sale establishment are being met, current weak markets may mean reduced interest from loggers, reduced stumpage value, or offered sales that are unable to be contracted for harvest. The statute directing harvest reporting appropriately acknowledges the inherent challenges by allowing for a +/- 10 percent biennium variance. The Council remains available for additional conversations with the DNR and the legislature going forward related to state harvest planning and reporting.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas Hittle". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Thomas Hittle
Wisconsin Council on Forestry Chair

*Please note that due to the nature of their positions, Council legislative members, State Forester Heather Berklund, and Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest Supervisor Jenn Youngblood abstain as sig