



Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry

## Update on education and outreach strategic planning process

### **Background**

When the Division of Forestry was developing our Strategic Direction, we decided to have a separate plan for our education and outreach efforts. We didn't have the resources or necessary information to make decisions on what the Division's education and outreach efforts should be at that time. A dedicated and specific process has been developed to determine the education and outreach efforts of the Division over the next five years. When completed, this plan will be folded into the Strategic Direction. The work to develop the Division's Education & Outreach Strategic Plan consists of two phases: assessment and planning.

In June 2012, the Division began an assessment of our education and outreach efforts. An executive summary of the assessment will be sent to partners at the end of March. (Attached to this brief is a summary of the input we received from partners.)

The components of the assessment include:

- an inventory of current education and outreach activities,
- a survey of partners to hear their opinion of the Division's education and outreach work and how our education and outreach partnerships are working,
- interviews with Division staff to understand the current state of our education and outreach efforts, and
- an analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis).

While the Division was conducting this assessment, the Council on Forestry's Education Task Force was meeting to discuss the state of forestry education and outreach efforts of the entire statewide forestry community. This information will help the Division understand what partners are doing and where the Division can assist or fill needs.

### **Planning Process**

The second phase of work is to develop a plan. We will use the information from the assessment to help develop strategies that build on our strengths and take advantage of opportunities. Our overarching intent with the development of our education and outreach plan is to ensure that the Division's messages are cohesive and delivered in an effective, efficient, integrated and coordinated way across Division programs. We also want to ensure that the Division's education and outreach is in line with and helps implement the Division's Strategic Direction.

The first steps in this process are to envision what outcomes we want to achieve and develop long term goals. Next we will develop specific strategies that will help us achieve those goals. We will also be identifying measures and ways to evaluate our efforts. Another part of our planning process is to revise how our Division programs work together and how they develop

specific education and outreach projects. This includes the ways we develop project objectives, messages, staff roles, activities, choice of audience and evaluation methods.

Throughout this process, we will draw on the opinions our partners shared with us in the assessment phase and our identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. We recognize the work of our partners and do not want to duplicate efforts. After we develop a draft list of strategies, we will ask partners to comment and suggest additional strategies.

### **Next Steps**

End of March: Executive summary of the assessment phase sent to partners.

May: Request for partners to provide input on our first draft of strategies.

June/July: Division works on developing internal systems to develop education and outreach projects. Update to partners on process and request for comment of draft plan.

August: Division finalizes the Education & Outreach Strategic Plan.