




WFPS High Priority Recommendations and Assignments


All recommendations as well as accomplishment reports can be found at <https://councilonforestry.wi.gov/Pages/ForestPracticesStudy/Accomplishments.aspx>




High Priority Team Recommendations	Assignments	Initial Est. Delivery Date	Revised Est. Delivery Date	Comments
SILVICULTURE Northern Hardwood Management				
<p>The WDNR should transition from guidelines and policy based on the order of removal as established in the WDNR Silvicultural Handbook and establish guidance, as opposed to rules, for individual tree selection in northern hardwood stands. Guidance should be adaptable to landowner objectives, consider both biological and economic concerns, and foster development of crop trees while maintaining minimum basal area stocking levels consistent with current northern hardwood silvicultural science.</p>	<p>The Wisconsin Silviculture Guidance Team (SGT) will examine whether the concept of order of removal should be retained and/or revised along with investigating other tree selection options. If retained, it will also explore how to add flexibility within the standard order of removal. SGT will expand current work revising and adding clarity to The WDNR Silviculture Handbook, Chapter 24: Tree Marking and Retention Guidelines and Chapter 21: Natural Regeneration - Single Tree Selection (STS). This work will include additional explanation on the proper application of marking processes within the context of landowner objectives and the resulting silvicultural prescription.</p>	Dec 2018	June 2019	<p>SGT has provided comments on the final draft and revisions have been drafted by the Ad Hoc to address SGT's concerns. Following SGT approval, the chapter will be ready for public comment. Currently waiting for new process for soliciting public comment on Guidance per Act 369.</p>
	<p>The SGT Northern Hardwood Ad Hoc Team will revise the WDNR Silviculture Handbook, Chapter 40: Northern Hardwood Chapter to add clarity to the single tree selection section, marking guide examples, and explore additional options to the single tree selection method to provide additional flexibility in achieving landowner objectives.</p>	Dec 2018	June 2019	

<p>The “crop tree” definition should be revised and expanded to include landowner objectives (economic, ecological, or social). A crop tree, having not yet achieved its maximum economic, ecological, or social potential, may increase in value by a jump in grade or increase in ecological function. The crop tree will exhibit quality with future potential. When the potential for increase in value growth peaks, it should no longer be considered a crop tree and should be eligible for harvest, subject to landowner objectives.</p>	<p>The Wisconsin Silviculture Guidance Team will evaluate and review ongoing work to develop a crop tree definition and complementary Growing Stock Classification System (GSCS) to help foresters evaluate tree quality and potential.</p>	Dec 2018	June 2019	<p>SGT has provided comments on the final draft and revisions have been drafted by the Ad Hoc to address SGT’s concerns. Following SGT approval, the chapter will be ready for public comment. Currently waiting for new process for soliciting public comment on Guidance per Act 369.</p>
	<p>The Wisconsin Silviculture Guidance Team will work to better define timber, aesthetic, and wildlife crop trees and provide tools for assessing crop trees within the WDNR Silviculture Handbook. In addition, the WDNR Northern Hardwood Ad Hoc Team will add a new economics section and revised stem quality section to the Northern Hardwood Chapter to expand on crop tree assessment.</p>	Dec 2018	June 2019	
	<p>The Wisconsin Silviculture Guidance Team will expand discussion on crop tree selection in addition to the Growing Stock Classification System in Chapter 24: Marking Guideline</p>	Dec 2018	June 2019	
<p>Criteria for adherence to forest tax law plans or prescriptions should move from a heavy reliance on uniform basal area and basal area stocking to a focus on the retention and increase of stem quality, along with considerations for landowner objectives, while maintaining minimum basal area stocking levels consistent with current northern hardwood silvicultural science, including accounting for natural regeneration needs and residual stem quality factors.</p>	<p>The SGT Northern Hardwood Ad Hoc Team will review and consider revisions to the Northern Hardwood Chapter, single tree selection section based on best available science. While some USFS Dukes and Argonne Experimental Forest research specific to stand density management is already discussed in the chapter, there is the potential to expand this information. See Assignment 1.2</p>	Dec 2018	June 2019	<p>SGT has provided comments on the final draft and revisions have been drafted by the Ad Hoc to address SGT’s concerns. Following SGT approval, the chapter will be ready for public comment. Currently waiting for new process for soliciting public comment on</p>

				Guidance per Act 369.
Aspen and Red Pine Rotation Ages				
Guiding principles should be developed that allow flexibility in rotation ages depending on site potential and recognize that the timing to rotate a stand can be influenced by unique stand conditions and other considerations such as landowner objectives, operability, markets, economics, social and ecological considerations.	The Wisconsin Silviculture Guidance Team Rotation Ad Hoc Team will continue work to define flexible rotation age guidance for aspen and red pine based on an examination of current research, actual stand data, field experience, and WFPS study results.	Dec 2018	Completed 	
SEASONALITY				
Oak Wilt Restrictions				
Request that the DNR provide training to all DNR foresters on changes to the oak wilt restrictions and support their implementation. This training should also be available to Cooperating Foresters.	The WDNR Forest Health Team in partnership with the UW-Extension will develop an oak wilt guidelines training program which reviews current guidelines and changes since the previous recommendations. This training should also aid conversations about risks associated with management. It will be open to WDNR Foresters (required), consulting & industrial foresters, and County forestry staff.	Dec 2018	Completed 	While a specific “training program” was not developed with UWEX, over 65 trainings were offered to WDNR foresters, consulting & industrial foresters, county forestry staff, loggers, and landowners between 2015 and 2018. For FISTA, 2 trainings specific to oak wilt were held in 2018 and another planned in 2019.
The Forest Industry Safety Training Alliance (FISTA) and the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association (WOAA) should provide similar training for loggers and forest landowners.	The WDNR Forest Health Team in partnership with the UW-Extension will develop an oak wilt guidelines training program which reviews current guidelines and changes since the previous recommendations. This training should also aid landowner understanding of risks associated with management. It should be open to any attendees.	Dec 2018	Completed 	

				Providing training on oak wilt guidelines and other forest health issues is an on-going work objective of the Forest Health Team and improvements to trainings are regularly implemented.
Prescription Writing				
The WDNR should review the resources most commonly used when writing timber harvest prescriptions and revise them where appropriate to align with most current guidelines and science. The resources should be modified as appropriate to avoid being overly specific (i.e. documents do not dictate 'frozen' ground when 'firm' or 'dry' would also be suitable). It will be very difficult to drive change without the review and revision of these documents.	The WDNR Public Lands Specialist Team will review what resources foresters use to determine seasonal restrictions (ex. frozen ground only). The Team will also review the concept of outcome-based specifications in order to enhance harvesting flexibility while protecting site productivity.	March 2018	December 2019 (TS HB) December 2020 (PL HB)	The Timber Sale Handbook is currently under a full review and revision including contract provisions and addendums. The Public Lands Handbook will be under a full review and revision in 2020. In addition, guidelines are regularly reviewed and revised as new research and other applicable information

				<p>becomes available. The next guidelines with expected new research to garner review are the biomass harvesting guidelines.</p>
<p>Following the revision of these documents, foresters (DNR, county and cooperators) need to be trained on the changes and the need for flexibility in prescription writing.</p>	<p>The WDNR Silviculture Program will review and revise prescription writing as a part of silvicultural training classes. As necessary, WDNR staff will amend training to review the impact of cumulative restrictions on forest management. If possible, it should be offered as a stand-alone class or open to WDNR Foresters, consulting & industrial foresters, and County forestry staff.</p>	<p>June 2018</p>	<p>Completed</p> 	<p>Changes are currently being implemented to the Division of Forestry's new forester training on this topic, including timber sale set-up and administration.</p> <p>Upcoming trainings and presentations include the Spring Cooperating Forester meeting, Spring WCFA meeting, and in the Summer 2020, a Northern Hardwood Symposium is being planned in northern WI with support from multiple agencies which will be open to forestry professionals in the Northeast US.</p>

Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) Restrictions				
Training and communication with foresters is needed on the procedures for NHI compliance.	The WDNR Natural Heritage Conservation Program will review NHI Assessment as a part of WDNR forestry classes. These classes will also be provided to County forestry staff and consulting foresters. As necessary, WDNR staff will alter training to review how to assess hits using the public portal as well as strategies to mitigate hits, in addition to recognizing the impact of cumulative restrictions on forest management.	March 2018	Completed 	Drew Feldkirchner from WDNR NHC presented at the March 2018 CoF meeting on the current state of NHI, the database, and access.
Legislation mandating a review and update of the NHI & Archeological database to remove outdated items is needed.	The WDNR Tax Law NHI Subcommittee will assess options for improving access to The NHI database, what reviews of NHI data have occurred or are occurring, and what role the WI Forestry Community has and should play in this. The review will identify components of the current NHI review process that impact the ability to update and maintain the database and limit user access. If necessary, The WI Council on Forestry, with this review in hand, can assess advocating legislation to address desired efficiencies.	June 2018	Completed 	Training are an on-going work objective of NHC staff and improvements to trainings are regularly implemented.
OUTREACH AND TRAINING				
Forester Economic Training				
When planning future events, WFPS investigators should be engaged to ensure training content includes their findings, thus maximizing the translation of research into practice. It would be particularly useful to have investigators participate in trainings when possible.	Continue and build upon recent forest industry training efforts to develop additional multi-stakeholder field training sessions on economics and operations. These trainings will review current economics software/tools (economic outcome/analysis)	March 2018	Completed 	Training is an on-going work objective of the Forest Products Services Team and improvements to trainings are regularly implemented.

	The Wisconsin Council on Forestry will create a summarized report of main contact leads for WFPS authors	March 2018	Completed ✓	
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