

# WI Council on Forestry

## State Forest Action Plan, CoF Possible Action Items

### CoF Member Survey, May 2024

Survey instructions: When scoring these, please think through our criteria for the best fit for the Council to act on: Is it an actionable task?, Is it something the Council can accomplish? Is no one else doing it? Is it an impactful and valuable objective? If you can answer “yes” to all of these, AND you feel this is where the council should prioritize time/resources over the next 1-2 years, the task would be a “4” – high priority. Score 1 – 4 with 1 being “not a priority” and 4 being “high priority”. (2 = “low” 3 = “moderate”).

Budget: Support MFL , range 1 – 4, avg 3.33

- I believe we should generally be supporting these forestry related budget items with regular/annual communication to the governor and legislature
- Write letters to legislators in support
- Makes forest management happen
- MFL has become a political tool. It is time to go back to FCL or design a new program focused on forest health and management
- Support role for what DNR is already doing.

Budget: Support Mill Tax commitment, range 2 – 4, avg 3.17

- I believe we should generally be supporting these forestry related budget items with regular/annual communication to the governor and legislature
- Not sure any politicians are ready to advocate for increased taxes, may have to reassess if forestry budget is cut
- The mill tax is important for forestry
- Important topic, but no current danger of losing funding, and others advocate

Budget: Support Refund of \$25M from Wildlife to Forestry Account, range 2 – 4, avg 3.09

- I put this as a low priority, because I doubt a refund will ever happen. I feel it's more important for the Forestry Community show the need for Forestry Account money be used to support initiative moving forward. If this were edited to protect the forestry account for uses that promote forests and forest industry I'd move this to a high priority.
- I'm not sure I'm particularly concerned about this - as long as it was a one-time incident, but speaking out against might be important so that it doesn't become a precedence
- Contact governor, legislators. Should not take from forestry account for other programs
- Never enough funding
- Support, but identify uses for this funding

Budget: Support WFLGP to meet growing demand, range 2 – 4, avg 3.27

- This feels like a unique moment in time where this support would advance critical forest health and economic interests and thus should be a special effort above and beyond the other budget items identified.
- It is a sound program, does it need more support?
- Need to improve roads

- DNR assists, but could use our advocacy?

Budget: Rural townships and counties have legitimate concerns about the impact of heavy trucks using their roads during spring thaws, but road bans greatly impact the timber industry during a significant part of the year. Advocate for part of the State's transportation budget to be designated specifically to improve roads serving key timber areas, similar to a new program benefitting agricultural areas, range 1 – 4, avg 3.33

- This feels like a unique moment in time where this support would advance critical forest economic interests and thus should be a special effort above and beyond the other budget items identified.
- Write letters to legislators in support, support GLTPA and other organizations on this
- Rural roads need to be better to support equipment.
- Spring thaw is what it is and will not be changing any time soon. There is not enough funding to maintain the roads as it is. Highly unlikely the council would have a significant impact on this topic.
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.

Budget: Funding for pilot projects such as bio-char which creates a partnership with Agriculture, range 1 – 4, avg 2.58

- Important but just doesn't seem as impactful as other items on this list
- makes sense to do.
- Great Product with few developed markets
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.

Budget: Advocate for improved transportation infrastructure – roads & rail, range 1 - 4, avg 2.92

- Important but too generic, like budget initiative above better
- Write letters to legislators in support, support GLTPA and other organizations on this
- Need infrastructure to move products.
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.

Budget: Continued support for LEAF, WFC, Mid-State, WIST, forest innovation and employment, range 2 -4, avg 3.33

- Important and ongoing, but not sure worthy of a "focus"
- Important programs, are they currently at risk?
- Infrastructure makes things happen.
- Critical role for us, but need specifics

Budget: Support for public awareness on benefits/co-benefits of Forestry in WI – need more \$'s to inform/educate the public, range 1 – 4, avg 2.92

- Important and ongoing, but not sure worthy of a "focus"
- Not a priority for the council, other organizations are doing a good job of this
- Critical role for us, but need specifics

Budget: Support dedicated FTEs for Good Neighbor Authority, range 1 – 4, avg 2.17

- Important and ongoing, but not sure worthy of a "focus"
- Is this needed, program at risk?

Communication: Communicate the importance of young and old forests to engage the public, range 1 – 4, avg 2.25

- Important and ongoing, but not sure worthy of a "focus"
- DNR, other organizations can take lead, maybe already are?
- Don't have the resources to be an educator

Communications: communicate with the public, DNR, legislature about forest health and the need for ongoing capacity to minimize forest health concerns, range 2 -4, avg 3.09

- Important and ongoing, but not sure worthy of a "focus"
- Focus on the legislature
- Do not understand this statement.
- Critical role for us, but need specifics

Communications: Demonstrate the role of sustainable forestry in advancing forest resilience and adaption and communicate this through an op-ed, news releases, range 2 – 4, avg 2.58

- Don't think we have the capacity to do this well
- DNR should take lead
- Don't have the resources to be an educator

Communications: Convene a panel discussion on winter/frozen ground harvest options, range 1 – 4, avg 2.25

- Fine as one off but not a "focus"
- Would GLTPA/DNR be more suited?
- Specific goal is good, relatively narrow topic

Communications: Educate the public on the success of Milwaukee's Ascent building as the country's tallest mass timber building and encourage State officials to adopt building codes that include mass timber as a proven option for tall structures, range 2 -4, avg 2.58

- not sure Ascent is the best example since the wood was imported from Europe. Innovations in Mass Timber, exploring the use of local wood and building with wood are important messages to get out.
- Intriguing, but from what we were told in earlier session WI is not well positioned to provide the wood necessary for this application
- Again, is educating the public a Council priority?
- Specific goal is good, relatively narrow topic

Communications: Utilize the new website as a tactical means for addressing the goal; "Wisconsin is a hub for diversified forest markets & non-market forest benefits" by highlighting

stories on our website on how Wisconsin is a hub for diversified forest markets and non-market forest benefits, range 2 – 4, avg 3.42

- Not sure we have the capacity to execute this
- We have the website, could include a page addressing the issue with links to other sites
- Highlighting specific examples of this with regular updating is a great way to utilize the website while engaging viewers
- Using the council's website makes sense.
- Essential part of what we do
- DNR has enabled COF to launch this new website. Let's make the most of what has now been established.

Communication: Communicate to local municipalities on the importance of maintaining transportation networks for the timber industry and considerations for road restrictions and weight limits, range 2 – 4, avg 3.08

- Like budget initiative better
- Maybe too large for Council, how many local municipalities are involved, support DNR as needed
- Communicate the importance of the forestry industry to (towns specifically) to the local economy.
- This needs to be done more through education regarding the public benefits of forest management which includes transportation.
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.

Communications: Council and Division of Forestry leadership should continue to communicate with their counterparts in neighboring states to explore opportunities for knowledge sharing, joint advocacy and partnerships, range 2 – 4, avg 2.64

- Valuable but not that exciting
- Good idea, maybe not the highest priority right now, but something to consider for the future
- Regional communication may help to develop future markets.
- Isn't this already taking place?
- Essential part of what we do

Communications: Create an awards program to recognize people and orgs practices good forestry. The Council has a unique role with its diverse membership and statewide role to recognize and promote people and organizations doing good forestry work in the state. Creating an awards/recognition program can tell these stories and raise awareness of all that can be accomplished. There are awards for logger conservationists in some states like Missouri, and Wisconsin has awards for farmer conservationists from NRCS and Sand County Foundation. If Wisconsin does not already have a logger conservation award, could the Council help convene a group to explore how that might work, range 1 – 4, avg 2.5

- we need to make sure there is a niche for CoF here. Who else is doing this type of recognition?

- I think this is the kind of effort that can be ongoing and can highlight and thus advance a lot of things on this list, so it is both an output and an outcome, plus don't see anyone else doing this broadly like the CoF could
- Great idea, the Invasives Species Council has something similar called "Invader Crusaders". It would engage the public but might be a big effort. Is the DNR positioned to take the lead with the Council supporting?
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.

Communications: Focusing specifically on an informed and engaged public, we could write short essays or op-eds on forest-related issues this year; issue press releases; and continue to do outreach to decision-makers and thought leaders to address the issues above, range 2 – 4, avg 2.58

- I like the idea, but unless we recognize who can do this I'm ranking as low.
- Like awards to drive this better than this being its own effort
- Overall, we could do more press releases to show our support of initiatives/projects
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.
- This is a great topic if someone has time to do the work.

Strategic Plan and Roadmap: Continue to encourage research of innovative new uses of under-utilized forest products such as pulp and sawdust—and emerging technologies to make these uses more cost effective. For example, more portable and affordable equipment can greatly expand the availability of bio-char to use as a soil amendment or stormwater quality tool. Advocate to legislators and state officials for policy and budget decisions that assist in promoting such advancements, range 2 – 4, avg 3.62

- Supportive of the Roadmap effort, but more overarching than any specific element
- Focus on advocating to the legislature
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.
- Makes sense to continue with this initiative since time and energy have already been devoted to it.

Strategic Plan and Roadmap: Support the DNR's Forest Products arm in its various efforts to study and promote a wide variety of forest products throughout the State. Encourage legislators and local officials to make economic development tools available for the restructuring and reopening of shuttered forest industry facilities and businesses. Range 2 – 4, avg 3.38

- Supportive of the Roadmap effort, but more overarching than any specific element
- Focus on advocating to the legislature
- Support role for what DNR is already doing.

Strategic Plan and Roadmap: Industries are showing great creativity in using forest products to move our country toward sustainability, including bio-fuel, paper packaging products, paper insulation, etc. The Council and its partners can spread the word about this innovation and

encourage companies to use these products on a large scale as part of ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) policies, range 1 – 4, avg 3.0

- Supportive of the Roadmap effort, but more overarching than any specific element
- Not sure we should get into ESG issues, it is becoming a political issue
- Interesting. EGS is more about money than the environment.
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.

Strategic Plan and Roadmap: The Council can use its diverse membership and partner organizations to bring different components of the forest industry together to share ideas and work toward common goals, range 1 – 4, avg 3.31

- Though capacity is uncertain, creating this overarching Roadmap still feels like the most impactful possibility for CoF,
- We had a summit in the past, but it takes a lot of work, might not have the resources to accomplish it
- With council members and associated stakeholders, communication and collaboration is a natural fit for the council.
- Already being done. Keep doing what you're doing.
- Essential part of what we do

Encourage forest product industries to **market carbon sequestration materials**, range 1 – 3, avg 2.08

- I'd suggest rewording to, ...encourage industry tell the story of how the use of forest products is climate-friendly, especially as compared to other materials (iron, plastic)
- Too generic and no capacity
- Gather material and make more readily available
- Specific goal is good, relatively narrow topic

Track the **mass timber Wisconsin building codes** updates and educated thought leaders on the topic. Range 1-3, avg 2.17

- Intriguing, but from what we were told in earlier session WI is not well positioned to provide the wood necessary for this application
- Support DNR forest products team as needed
- Specific goal is good, relatively narrow topic

Better understand the options for institutional **purchasing of WI forest products by organizations in the state**, range 1 – 4, avg 2.08

- maybe for some group, but not for CoF
- This should be done - by someone - not clear CoF is the right entity
- Specific goal is good, relatively narrow topic

Track the **USFS old growth** NEPA process and provide a letter responding to the Draft EIS when that becomes available, range 1 – 4, avg 2.80

- Worth doing as a one-off, but not a real "focus"

- This has the potential to make large changes to USFS management that might not be good for forestry
- Specific goal is good, relatively narrow topic

Ask DNR for updated data on **trends in forest age class**, including forests with old growth characteristics and managed old growth, as well as early successional forest, range 2 – 4, avg 2.5

- Fine as one-off, not very "strategic"
- Would this be part of the review on USFS old growth?
- Specific goal is good, relatively narrow topic

Review **DNR Priority Research initiatives** Query DNR on Status of those Initiatives, range 1 – 4, avg 2.25

- Fine as one-off, not very "strategic"
- Should let Prescribed Fire Council take the lead
- No priority on the following 5 items until the research initiatives are revealed.
- Essential part of what we do

Review **DNR Priority Research initiatives** and write a letter supporting the research to the person in charge of overseeing the research, range 1 – 3, avg 2.09

- Fine as one-off, not very "strategic"
- Should let Prescribed Fire Council take the lead
- Need an overall update first

Review **DNR Priority Research initiatives** write a letter to legislators if more funding is needed to either start or complete the research, range 1 – 4, avg 2.55

- Advocating for \$\$ feels like critical role for CoF
- Should let Prescribed Fire Council take the lead
- Need an overall update first
- Important to identify important research and keep research funded

Consider **grant writing** to advance research and practice on this issue, range 1 – 4, avg 2.0

I like the concept, but do not know who could do this. If the Council had staff, this would be a high priority for me.

- Who does it for what? If for Roadmap then I'm supportive as it would secure capacity to creat impact, if for lessor/one-offs then doesn't feel worth the time
- Grant writing may be beyond the scope of the council

Ask DNR to identify strategies **to increase the acres of prescribed burns** in forests and savannas to improve habitat and regeneration, range 1 – 4, avg 1.83

Fine as one-off

- Should let Prescribed Fire Council take the lead
- Seems ironic that while government agencies place more restrictions on biomass burning facilities with the Good Neighbor Plan (not GNA) that the same agencies are allowed to burn.

- Support role for what DNR is already doing.

Use recent advancements in workforce concepts promoted by the City of Milwaukee and tech schools to **broaden arborist apprenticeship programs**, add “Arborist” to a list of certified positions for high school students to consider, and form more partnerships with tech schools to provide the classroom portion of such programs, range 1 – 3, avg 2.36

- I'd rank this higher if I knew how this could happen.
- Fine as one-off
- Support Urban Forest Council on this
- Not familiar with this program.
- Specific goal that uses the reach and diversity of our Council regarding a key issue.

Promote existing programs to municipalities around the state. Wisconsin Urban Wood has created a program that facilitates **partnerships between cities struggling to safely dispose of urban wood** and the area industries that can put that wood to use. Federal funding may be available to assist homeowners with the cost of such removal, which is a significant burden to many. Range 1 – 3, avg 2.0

- not sure how this could happen, also the Urban Council can lead her, CoF can support .
- Valuable but not sure this is CoF's role, could be supportive
- Promote on website by linking to organizations promoting the programs
- Not familiar with this
- Specific goal is good, relatively narrow topic