



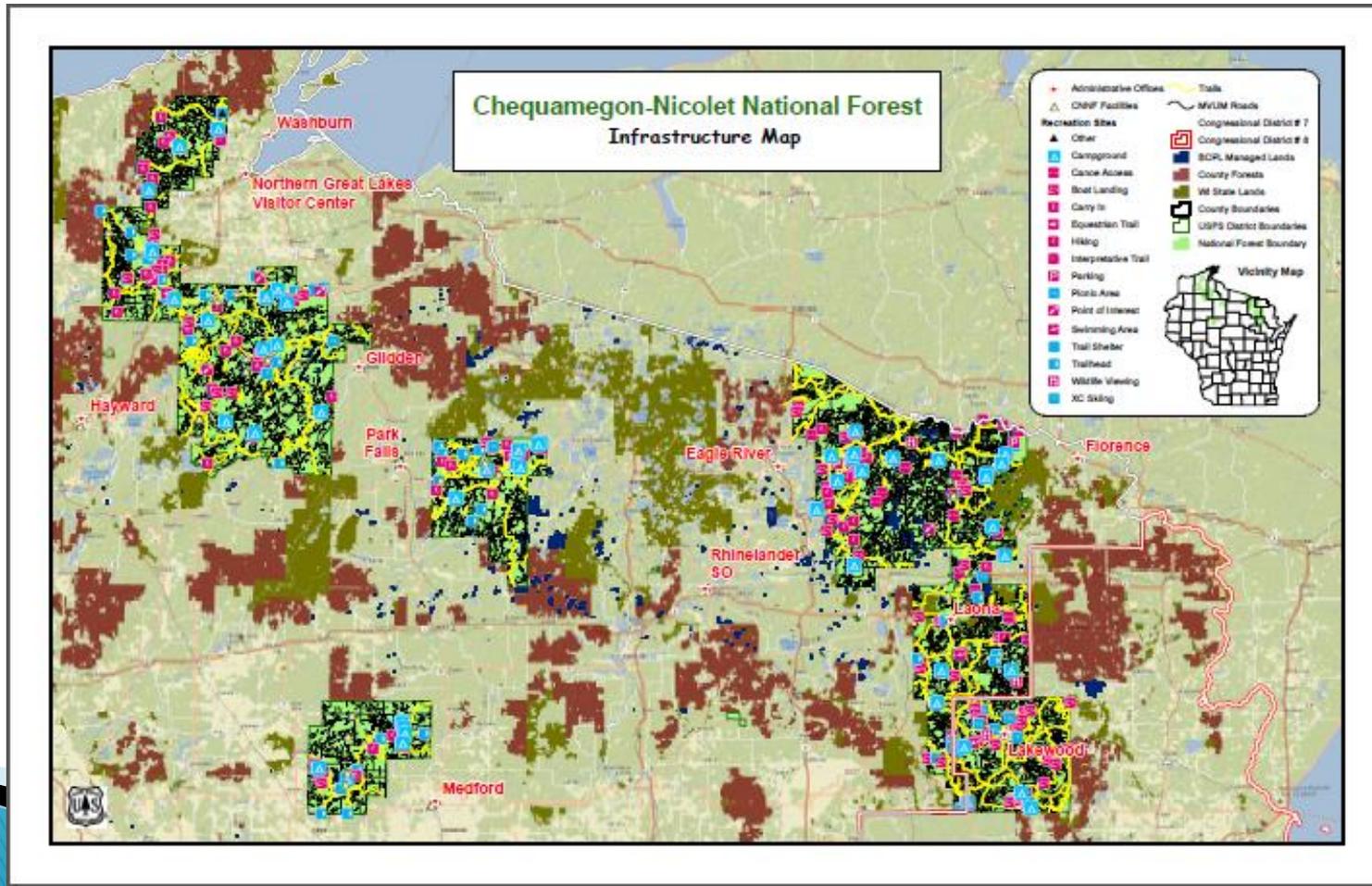
# Status of Sustainable Forest Management on the Chequamegon–Nicolet NF



May 31, 2018  
Council on Forestry

# Chequamegon–Nicolet National Forest

1.5+ million acres of national forest in 11 counties and 66 Towns embedded in matrix of County, State, Tribal, and private lands of NWI.



# 2018 – Perspective

- ▶ 85 years ago – national forests in Wisconsin
- ▶ 20 years ago – official consolidation of Chequamegon and Nicolet National Forests
- ▶ 14 years ago – revised CNNF Forest Plan
- ▶ 4 years ago – 2014 Farm Bill with Good Neighbor Authority and permanent Stewardship Contracting authority
- ▶ 3 years ago – first GNA agreement in country
- ▶ 1 year ago – last year of CNNF unaffected by Emerald Ash Borer???

# Sustainable Forest Management Goals – 2004 Forest Plan

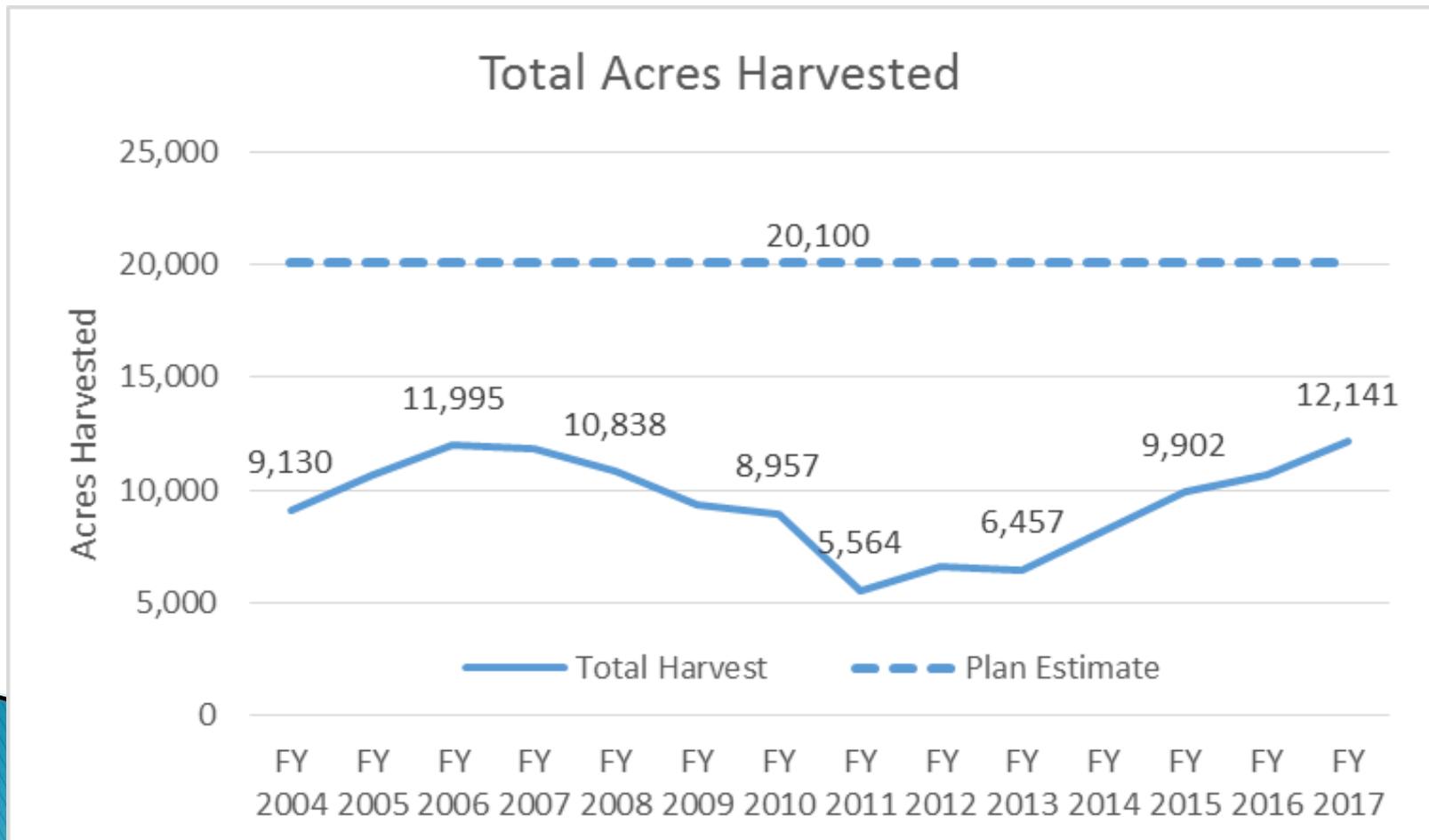
- ▶ Based around “desired future conditions”
  - Acres and locations of forest types
  - Stand conditions (BA, age class, etc.)
  - Use of commercial timber harvest as a tool to adjust stand conditions with steady flow of desirable forest products in acres deemed “suitable for timber production”
  - Keep out and/or react to invasive species
  - Maintain soil productivity
  - Help recover T&E species
  - Maintain viability of plants and animals

# A Few Indicators of “How it is Going”

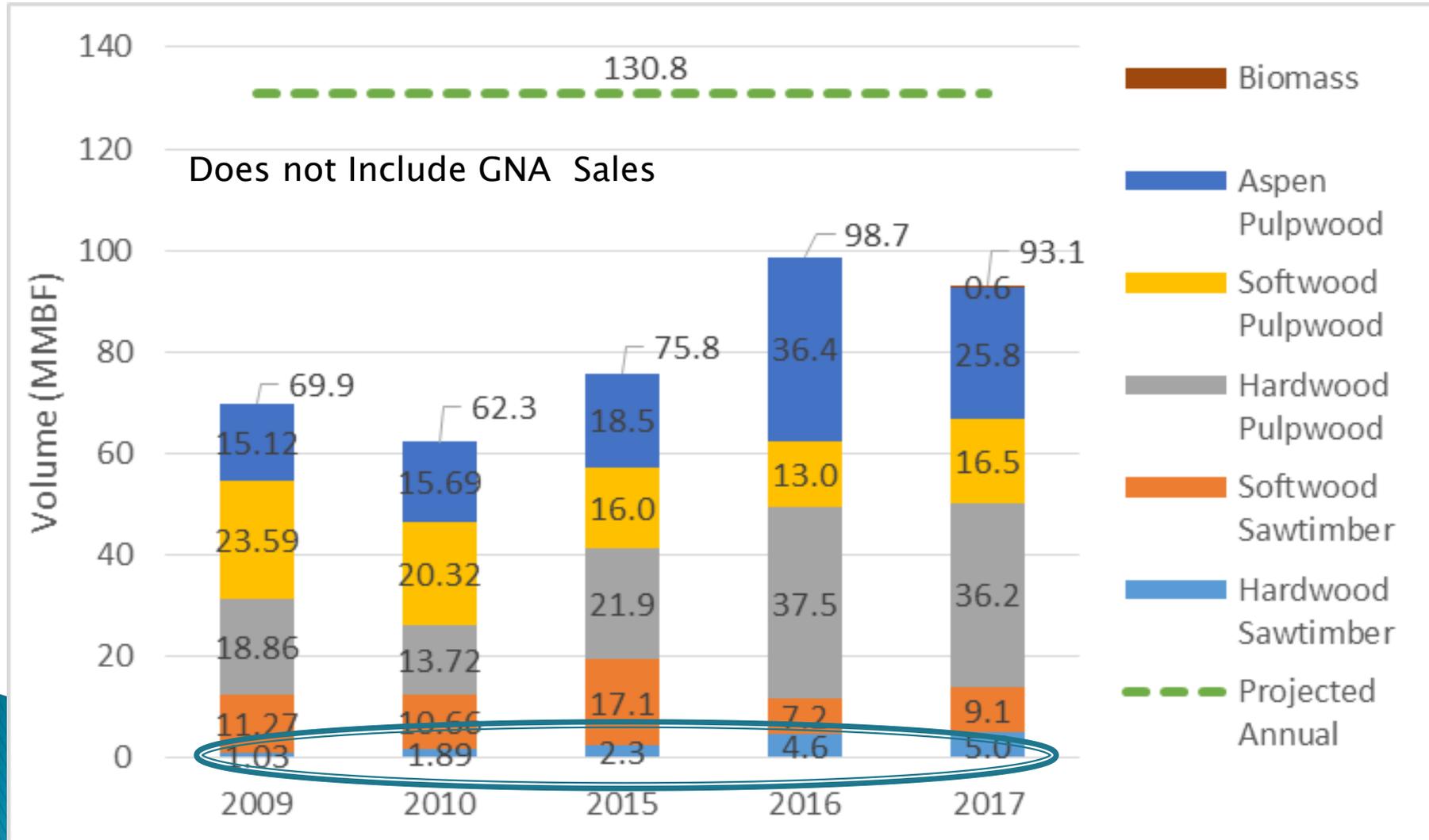
- ▶ Soon to be completed and released comprehensive monitoring and evaluation report on all aspects of national forest management based on indicators identified in Forest Plan.
  - ▶ Here are a few focused around forests and timber production.
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# Forest Plan – Restoring and Sustaining Forest Types

Acres harvested as an indicator – progress still needed to meet desired future conditions of major forest types; expect to increase to 15,000 acres/year with GNA.

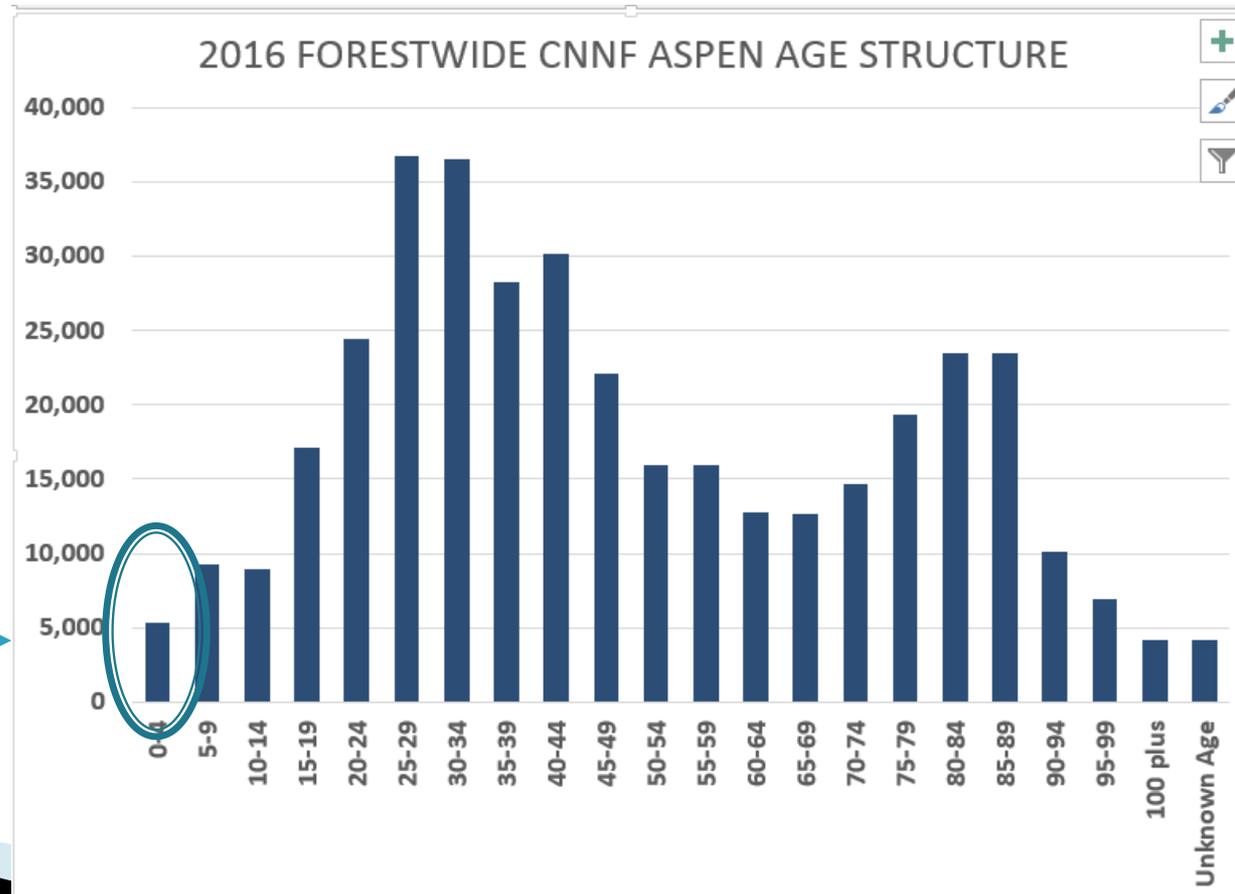


# Sustaining Economies and Communities – Mix of Forest Products

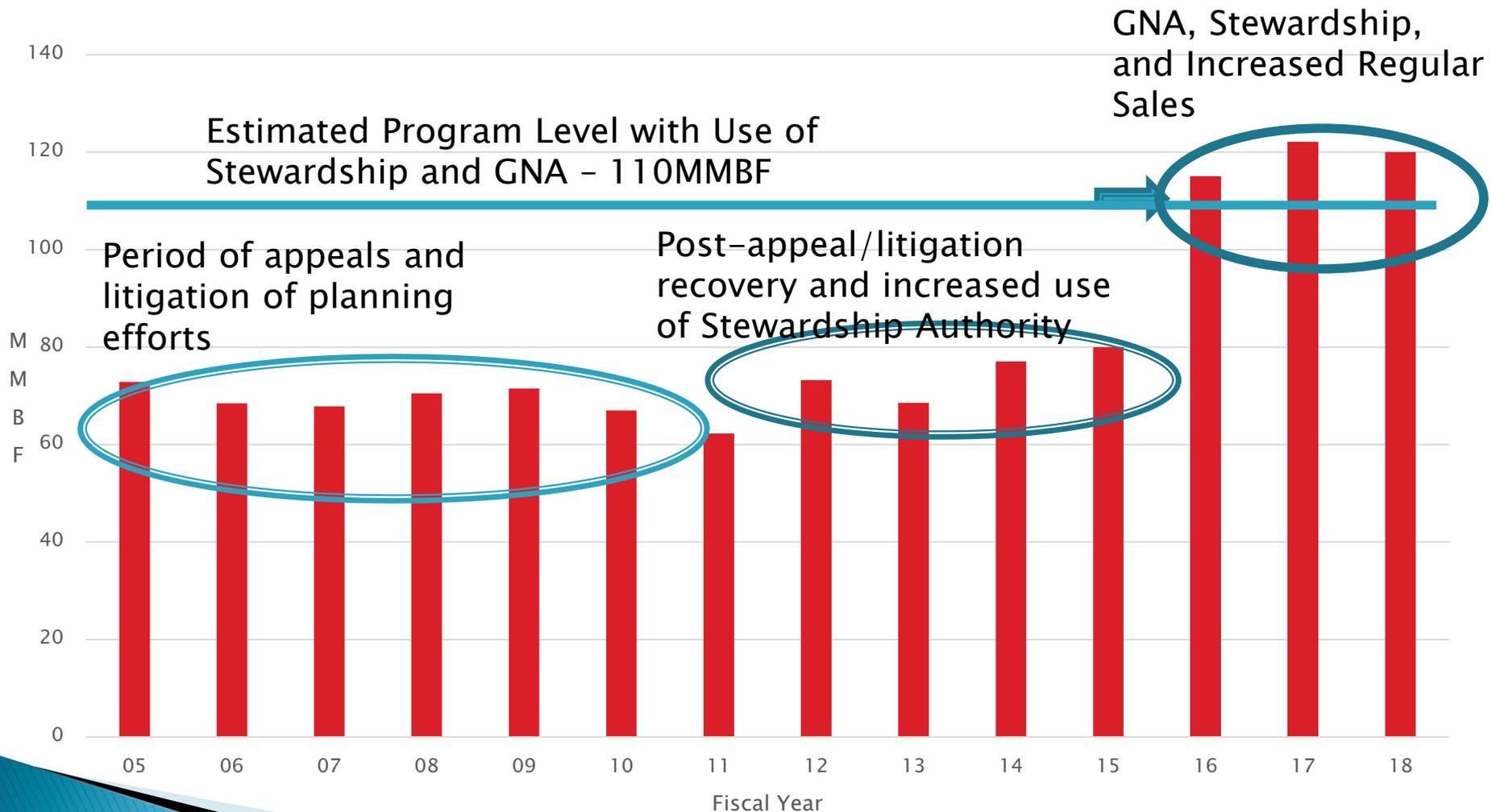


# Sustaining Forest Types – Aspen Forests

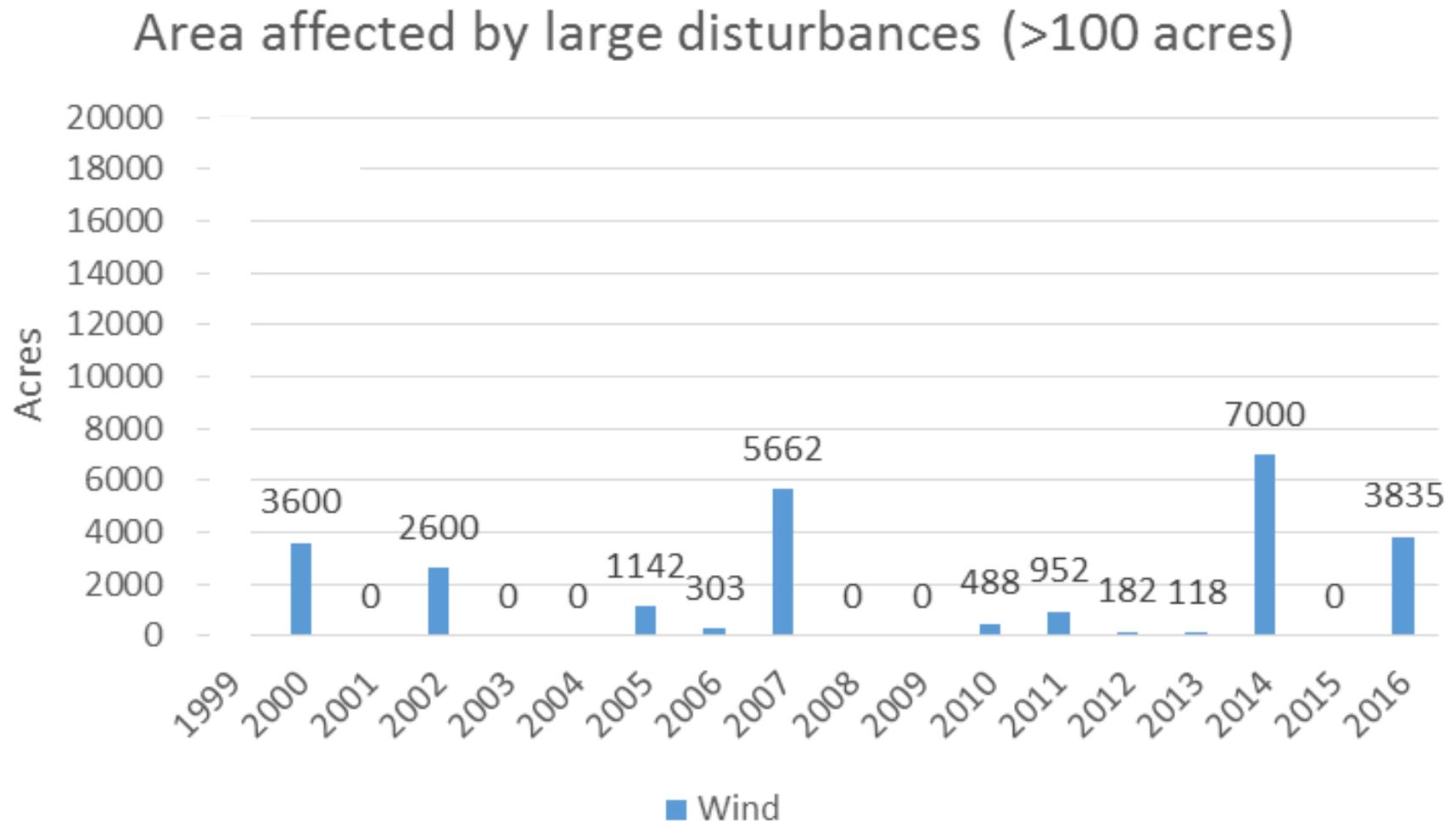
- ▶ Aspen Dominated Forest Types = Approximately 325,000 acres on CNNF Lands
- ▶ Age class distribution still an issue – decades of work to do
- ▶ GNA will result in more acres in youngest age class



# CNNF Timber Volume Sold

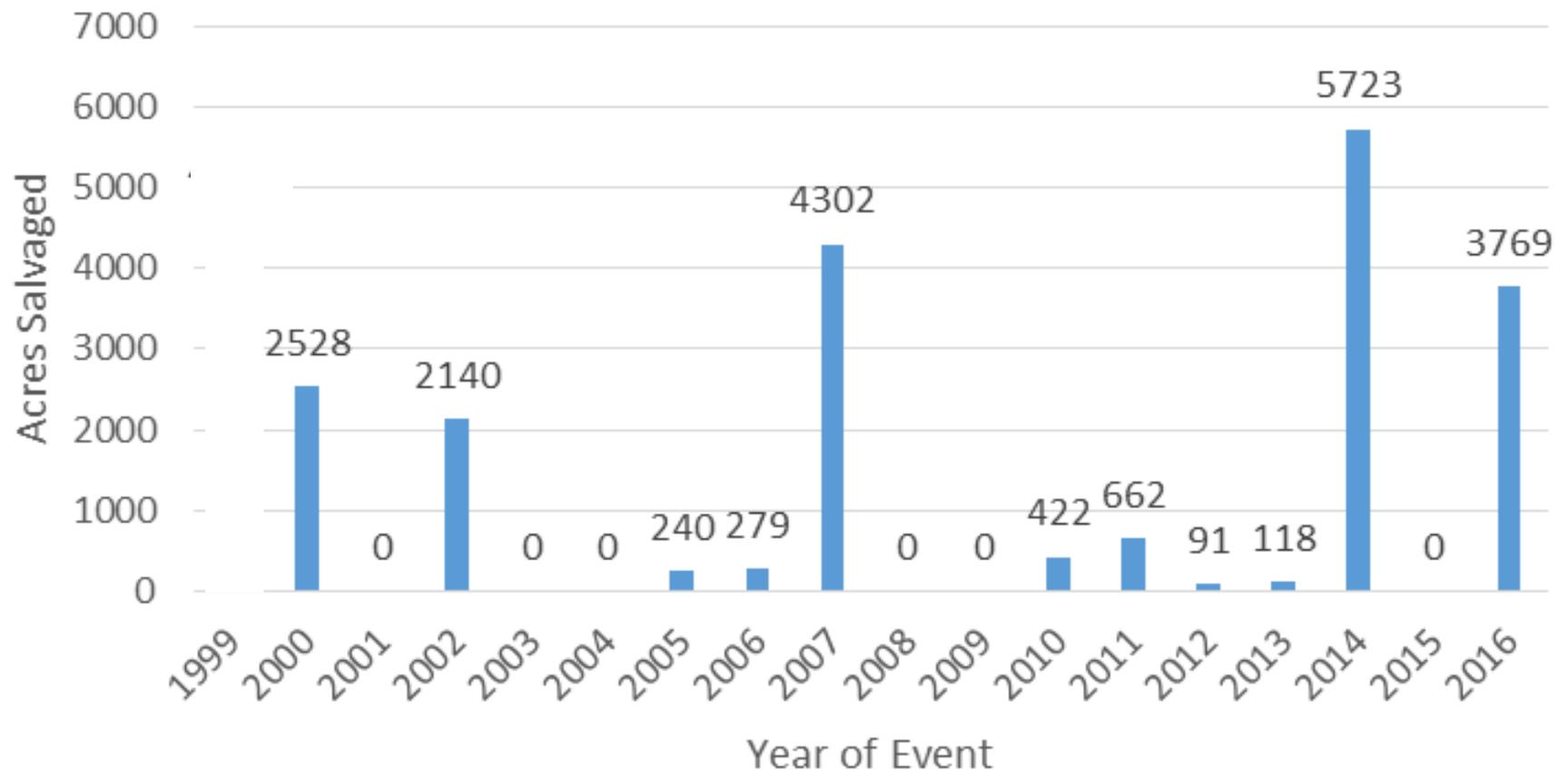


# Sustaining Productivity – Addressing Blowdown – Capturing Value and Restoring Productivity



# Addressing Blowdown - Capturing Value and Restoring Productivity

Salvage Following Large Disturbances



# 2014 Chequamegon Blowdown and Restoration

- ▶ September 2014; Severe Thunderstorms accompanied with high winds damage significant tracts of Forest Land in Sawyer and Price Counties –5,700 acres
- ▶ Approximately 45 Million board feet of timber recovered



# 2016 Chequamegon Flood and Windstorm and Restoration

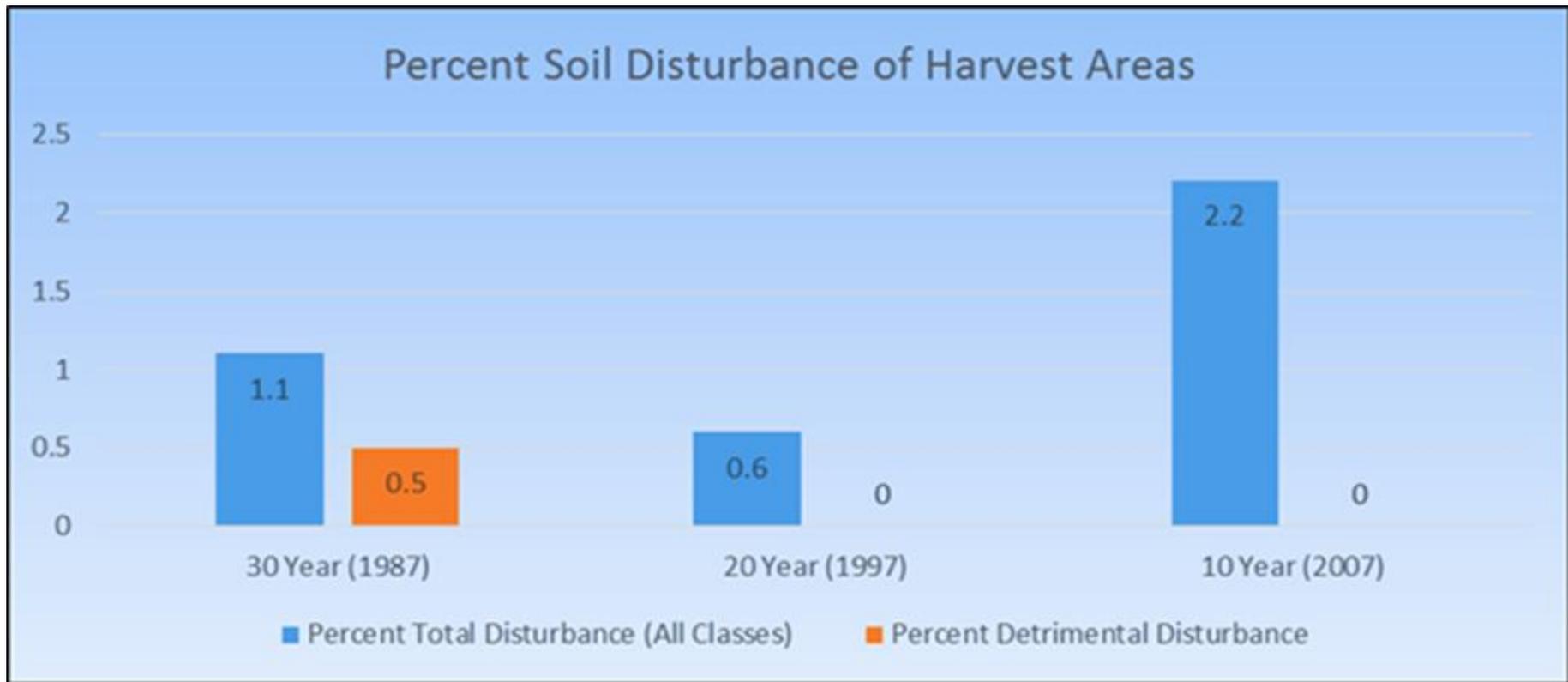
- ▶ July 11, 2016; Episodic Rain Event damaged roads and other infrastructure in Ashland, southern Bayfield, and Sawyer Counties.
- ▶ July 21, 2016; Straight Line Wind Event damaged forests in Bayfield County. 3,800 acres treated – 20 million board feet recovered.



# Forest Management and Timber Sales – Bottom Lines

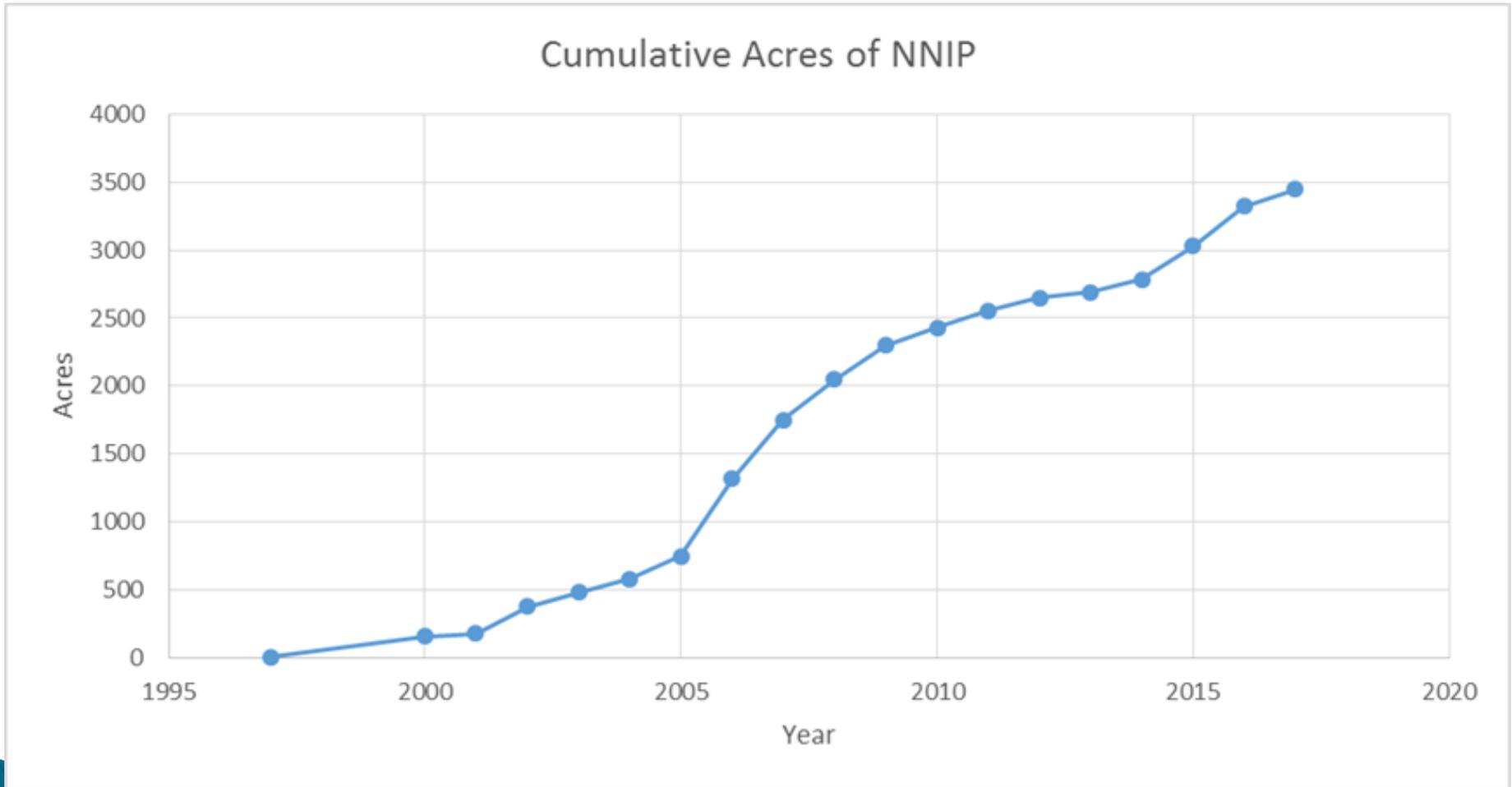
- ▶ All forest types continuing to need additional attention.
- ▶ Young and old Aspen forests remain an issue, but progress on horizon.
- ▶ Making progress in Northern Hardwood forests, but long way to go.
- ▶ Pine forests closer to DFC's, but a small backlog and continued attention needed.
- ▶ Blowdown salvage is occurring.

# Sustaining the Source of All Productivity – Soil Quality



Soil quality is maintained in timber harvest areas – soils recover over time with current BMP's.

# Sustaining Integrity – Holding Back Alien Invaders



Minimal acres but growing...

# Sustaining Integrity – Alien Invaders – Emerald Ash Borer

- ▶ Not yet detected on CNNF lands, but close.
- ▶ Most ash in low productivity black ash swamps, but significant white ash component in many NHWD stands.
- ▶ No good strategy (yet)

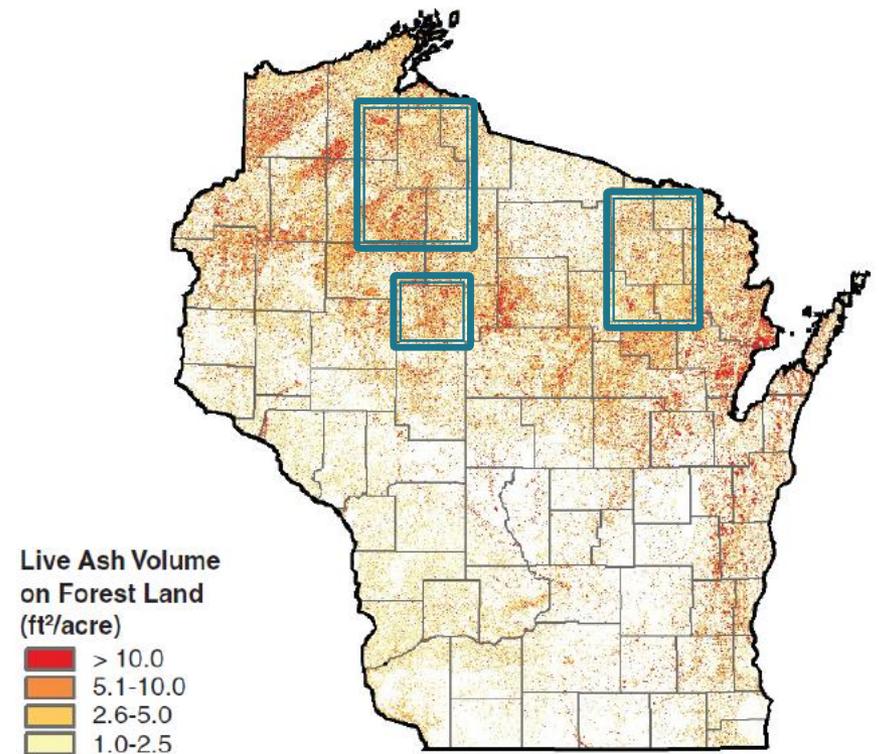
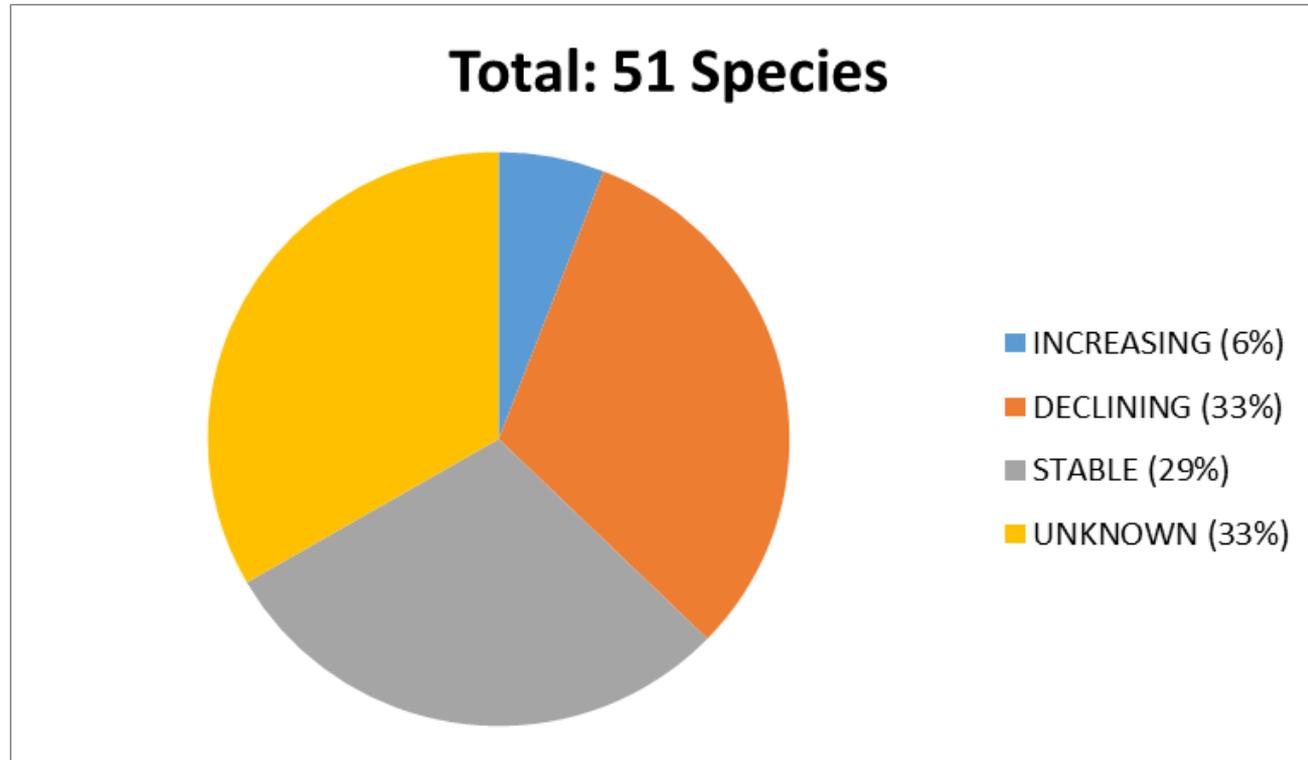


Figure 67.— Ash density on forest land, Wisconsin, 2009.

# Sustaining All Species – Keeping all the “Cogs and Wheels”

## Trends in Sensitive Species



Trends and effects of earthworms, weather patterns, deer browse and more?

# New Tools With High Potential to Help Address Sustainability Issues – Good Neighbor Authority

**Provides Additional Capacity When State Willing to Work on National Forest through an “Agreement” mechanism**



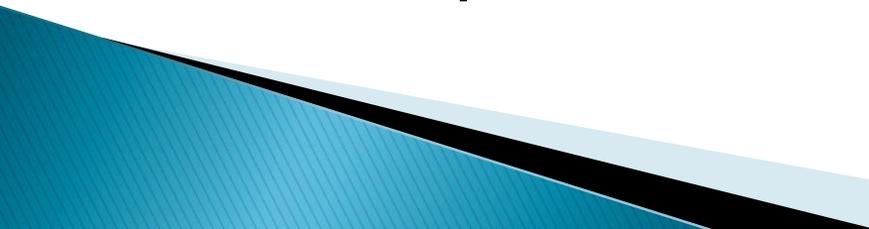
# Good Neighbor Authority

- ▶ A partnership – has to work for both partners – how much, where, when, etc.
- ▶ **Forest Service “contribution”** – shelf ready timber projects for State to prepare, bid, award, and administer.
- ▶ **State “contribution”** – organize and implement business model to accomplish award of timber sales in year projects are provided.
- ▶ State is reimbursed for 100% of their investments from value of timber sold, but still a cost to bear.
- ▶ Remaining funds from value of timber (aka “program income” can be reinvested in restoration work on national forest.

# Good Neighbor Authority

- ▶ Chequamegon–Nicolet NF and State of Wisconsin developed **first and largest** GNA agreement in the country!!
- ▶ **Provided additional 75MMBF** of national timber sales in first three years. 25MMBF provided in 2018.
- ▶ Expect **\$1,000,000 annually** for national forest **restoration projects**.

# Stewardship Contracting Authority

- ▶ Full and permanent authority in 2014 Farm Bill
  - ▶ Testing Benefits of “Agreement” side of authority – **Renewable Resource Solutions, Florence County Parks and Forestry, The Nature Conservancy**. Looking for “optimal approach.”
  - ▶ Has added capacity of approximately 10MMBF annually.
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# Sustaining Progress – Future “Inventory” Projection

Continuing investments in project planning (NEPA) on all five Ranger Districts to ensure future opportunities for:

- GNA sales
- Stewardship Contracting
- FS sales
- Product mix
- Seasonality mix
- Geographic availability to local loggers and mills
- Potentially increased overall sale level

After current round of project planning work completed in late 2018, will re-assess where we need to make next project planning investments.

Will have 4–5 years of projects with NEPA clearance.

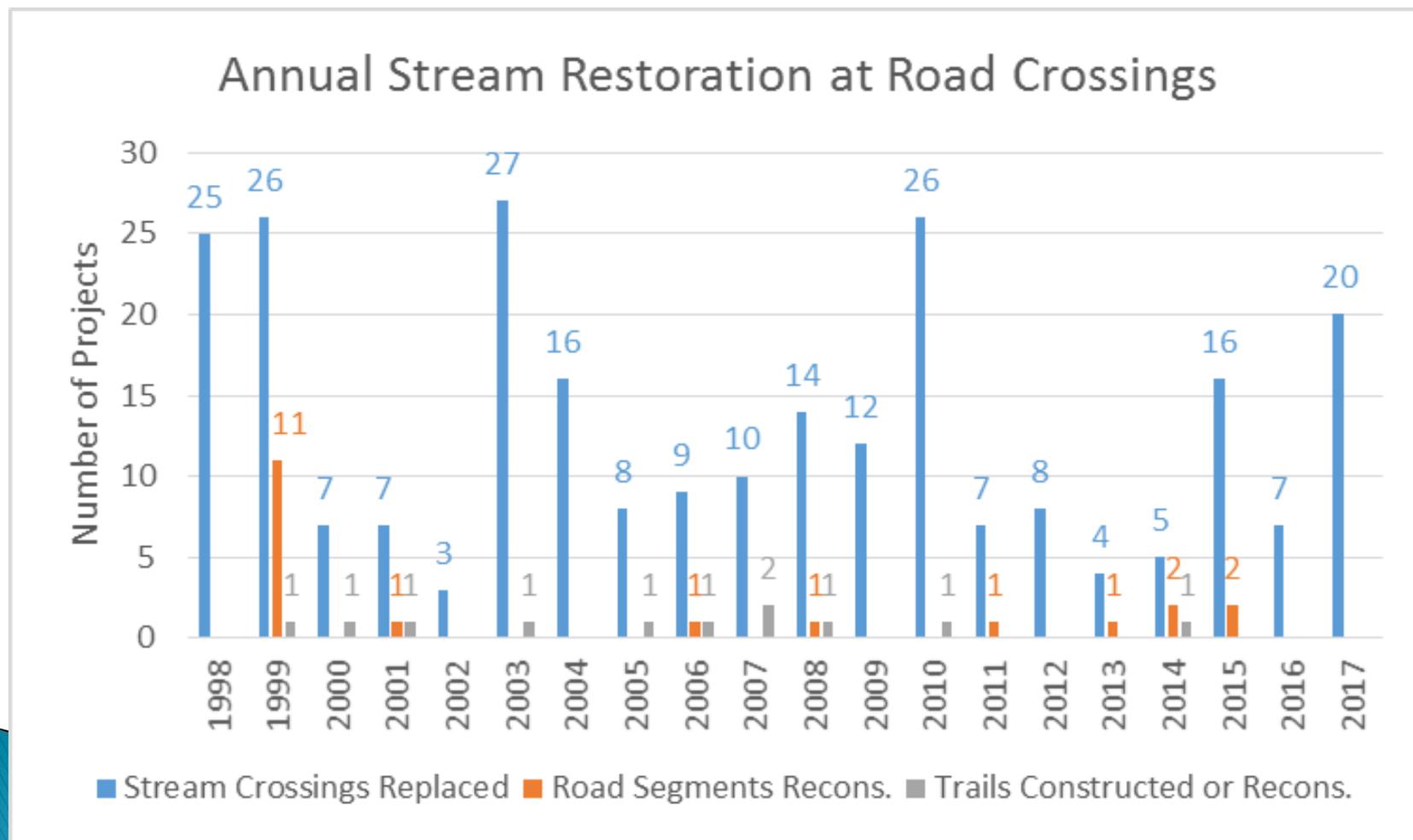
# Ensuring a Sustainable Future – Maintaining Key Infrastructure

- ▶ Roads and Culverts and Bridges

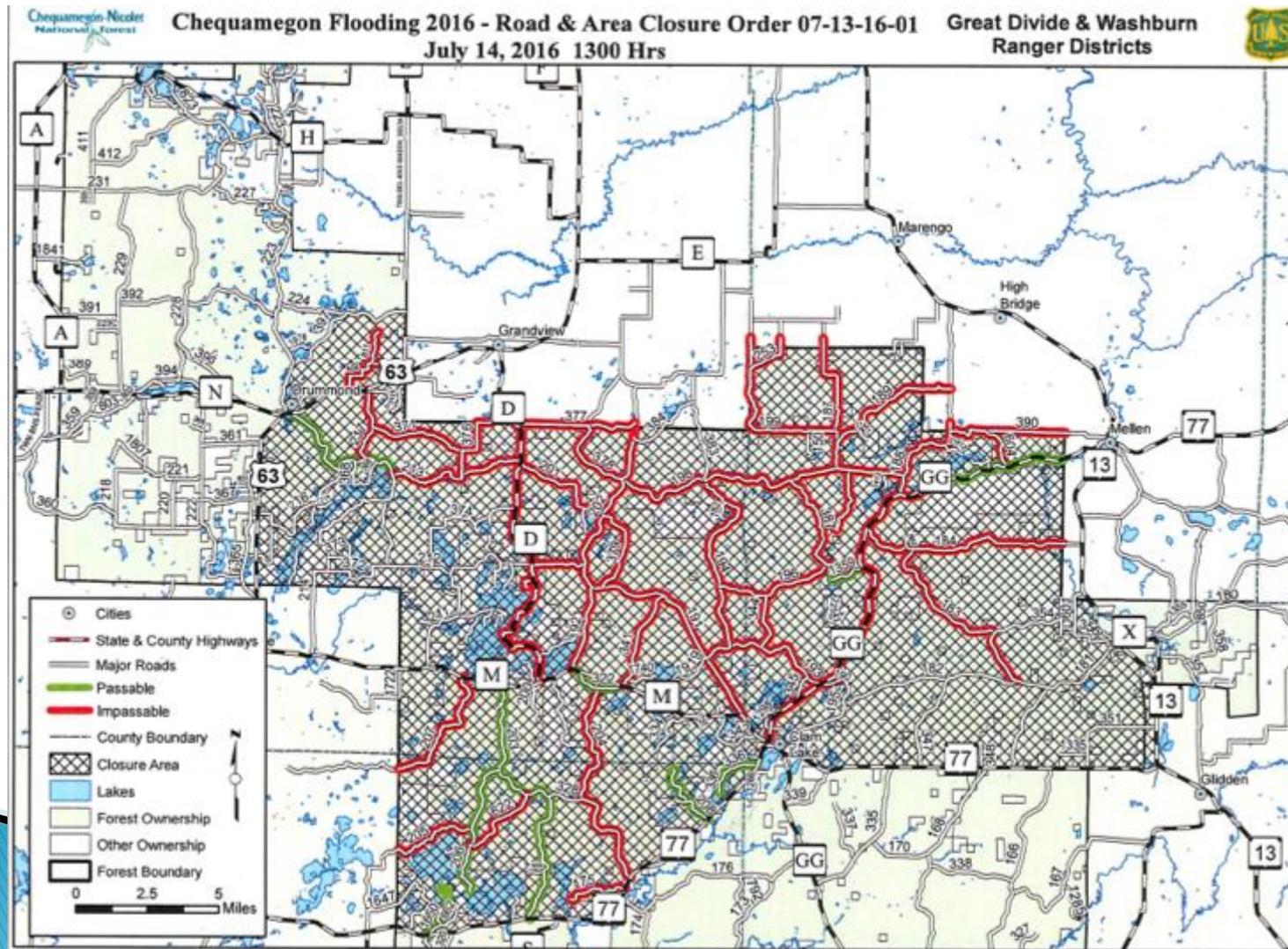


# Ensuring a Sustainable Future – Maintaining Key Infrastructure

## ▶ Roads and Culverts



# Ensuring a Sustainable Future – Maintaining Key Infrastructure



# Coming Attractions for Improving Sustainability

## Forest Products Modernization

- ▶ National effort to “re-engineer” forest products delivery system while capturing “low-hanging fruit” changes.
  - Designation by prescription
  - Weight-scaling
  - More to come

# Coming Attractions

## EADM – Environmental Analysis and Decision Making

- ▶ National effort to improve efficiencies and outcomes in implementing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
  - Administrative Efficiencies
  - New categories for Categorical Exclusions (simplest form of NEPA)
  - Federal Register Notice identifying agency effort to make changes to approach to NEPA (non-specific)
  - More to Come

# Credits

- ▶ Hard working and dedicated CNNF Employees
  - ▶ Committed partners and their employees and volunteers
    - Wisconsin DNR
    - County Forests
    - TNC
    - RRS
    - GLTPA
    - FSFC
  - ▶ Congress
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