

Wisconsin Forestry Practices Study

Carmen Hardin

Applied Forestry Bureau Director, WDNR



Goals of WFPS

- Ensure that Wisconsin's forest products industries remain competitive and vibrant
- Assure that ecological, economic, and social benefits of Wisconsin's forests continue for future generations
- Provide information to better understand where efficiencies can be gained to achieve those goals



WFPS – What is it?

- 2013: WCFA & GLTPA received \$600,000 from WI Legislature to conduct a comprehensive study of Wisconsin's forestry practices
- 2014: WFPS Economic Workshop with forest industries
- 2014-2016: Six studies were completed
- 2017: Studies informed three areas of focus for recommendations and assignments:
 - Seasonality
 - Silviculture
 - Outreach and Training



Seasonality Recommendations and Assignments

- Oak wilt
 - Provide oak wilt guidelines training to DNR and county foresters, cooperating foresters, loggers and landowners (R)
 - Develop oak wilt training program (A)
- Rutting
 - Review current past research into ecological effects of rutting and definition of rutting (A)
- Prescription Writing (aka Timber sale set-up and administration)
 - Re-train state, county and cooperating foresters on need for flexibility (R)
 - Amend training to review the impact of cumulative restrictions on forest management (A)
- Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI)
 - Education (training/communication) is needed... similar to oak wilt (R)
- EAB



Progress

- Assigned Parties: DNR and UWEX
- Small group meetings with DNR & UWEX
 - First with individual focus areas
 - Two group meetings
 - Breaking assignments up into three workgroups: Training, Reporting/Monitoring, and Communication
- Focusing on public lands managers first, then transition to private lands with lessons learned from public



The Goal

Public land foresters will:

- Understand timber sale set-up, marketability, operability, and administration considerations
- Understand guidelines as well as science and rationale behind them
- Apply guidelines appropriately to site
- Can communicate why guidelines are or are not applicable to site
- Optimize use of flexibilities applicable to site
- Establish and administer timber sales that reflect sustainable forest management with consideration of economic factors for the public land manager, logger, and wood purchaser



Silviculture Recommendations and Assignments

- Northern Hardwoods
 - Review order of removal, crop tree definition, and marking guides
 - Provide training
- Aspen and Red Pine Rotations
 - Allow flexibility in rotation ages based on current research, stand data, field experience, and WFPS studies
- Assigned Parties: WDNR & SGT



Northern Hardwoods

Marking Guidelines Ad Hoc Team

- Focusing on marking guidelines, crop tree definition, order of removal and growing stock status
- Previously SGT was addressing
- Created a new Ad Hoc in April 2018 to speed process
- Met in June and July, conference call in October
- Present final draft to SGT for public comments at December meeting
- Expect to solicit public comments in early 2019



Northern Hardwoods

Northern Hardwood Ad Hoc

- Completed a majority of assignments, but still working on a couple
- Met in July and October, and a conference call in Septembers
- Present final draft to SGT for public comments at December meeting
- Expect to solicit public comments in early 2019



Aspen and Red Pine Rotations

- SGT previously identified need to incorporate economic considerations in aspen, red pine and oak
- Aspen and Red Pine rotation age revisions went out for public comment in July
- SGT reviewed in August
- Ad Hoc currently working on responses to comments
- Revisions expected to be finalized before end of year



Silviculture Handbook

- Not directly tied to WFPS recommendation
- SGT decided to review Silviculture Handbook as a whole though to see if we could better meet intent of WFPS recommendations and assignments
- Surveyed users of Silviculture Handbook in summer 2018
- Presented findings and resulting recommendations to SGT in August



Silviculture Handbook

- Over 300 people completed survey
- Generally most people found SH valuable
- Split between wanting more information and less information
- Most felt flexibility provided was “just about right”
- Many were not aware of silvicultural trials



Silviculture Handbook

Recommendations

- Rescind as a handbook and have it be a general resource on same level as BMPs for WQ, Forest Health Guidelines, Biomass Guidelines...
- Create “quick guides” for each cover type chapter while maintaining extensive referenced background for those wishing to refer to it
- Standardize cover type chapters
- Explore tools to make it easier to find information



Outreach and Training Recommendations and Assignments

- Seek better coordination of outreach and trainings (R)
- Create a team to review current outreach & prioritize needs (A)
- Develop standardized system for monitoring and evaluating WDNR training & outreach efforts (A)



Progress

- Assigned Parties: WDNR & UWEX
- WPFAC providing conduit to address WFPS recommendations and assignments
- March 2018 – WPFAC & Ad Hoc Team prepared NIPF Landowner Engagement Report with recommendations approved by Chief State Forester



Outreach Review

- ***“The Next Million Acres”***
- Aligning resources & working with partners to achieve this goal
- Focusing on outcomes, strategies, and accountability
- Exploring development of statewide Education & Outreach Coalition with UWSP
- Piloted WoodsCamp with AFF, ALF, UWEX & others
- Developed YouTube videos & radio spots of landowner testimonials with WWOA



Outreach Evaluation

- Developing reporting system to track woodland owners and their activities to allow WDNR to:
 - Understand if/how landowners respond to various outreach campaigns
 - Track landowners movement along continuum of engagement
 - Track progress on reaching the ***Next Million Acres***



