
Wisconsin Forestry Notes

June 2013

Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry

Many collaborate to fight a devastating fire in Douglas County.

Fire season sparked to life in May

After a snowy and wet spring kept forest fire danger low throughout much of Wisconsin, DNR firefighters and local fire departments had a busy few weeks in May. The Germann Road fire burned 8,131 acres in Douglas County, making it Wisconsin's third largest wild-fire in recent history. A total of 47 structures were lost in this fire, including 17 homes, while another 77 structures were threatened but saved with firefighter assistance. An analysis of data from post-fire assessments will help the Division determine which homes are more likely to survive a wildfire and improve our [Firewise](#) recommendations.

Gov. Walker and DNR Secretary Stepp toured the fire area on May 16th and visited with locals devastated by the incident. The governor issued an [Executive Order](#) declaring a state of emergency in response to the forest fire. Dealing with this large fire was a collaborative effort with assistance from 37 fire departments, Wisconsin DNR staff from other Divisions in addition to the Division of Forestry, Minnesota DNR, Michigan DNR, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, US Forest Service, state patrol, sheriff's departments, Department of Transportation, state and county emergency management, Red Cross, the Drummond High School and many others.

In addition to media interviews, news releases and social media posts, a [fire page on the DNR Website](#) provided information about the Germann Road Fire. We are continuing to update this page with 'after the fire' information for property owners. The Department also staffed a hotline to provide status information to local homeowners during the fire.

The Wisconsin Council on Forestry is preparing proposed changes to the Managed Forest Law program.

Council studies Managed Forest Law program

The Wisconsin Council on Forestry's examination of possible amendments to the [Managed Forest Law \(MFL\)](#) is progressing toward a final report which is anticipated to be completed in early June. This follows the completion in April of the report from the Council's MFL committee and two subsequent Council meetings where members took an in-depth look at the issues and possible amendments. More information is provided on the [Council's website](#).

Packers and Brewers help plant trees in Wisconsin communities.

Partnerships continue with sports teams

The state nursery and urban forestry programs continued the third year of the "Root, Root, Root for the Brewers - Plant a Tree" partnership in May. The Milwaukee Brewers contributed funding to plant 56 trees along the Hank Aaron State Trail and 96 trees in four communities near Miller Stadium. The DNR nursery program donated 7,000 white spruce seedlings handed out to baseball fans at the May 1st game against the Pittsburgh Pirates.

A tree planting event at the headquarters of Wisconsin Public Service on May 30th kicked-off of the fourth year of the "[First Downs for Trees](#)" partnership with the Green Bay Packers and other sponsors. This initiative began as a way to help the Packers offset their carbon production when flying to away games by donating trees to be planted in Brown County municipalities based on their first downs during each regular season. More than 400 trees were planted in 22 communities following the first year of the program. A Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant boosted the number to 850 trees in 22 communities in year two and another Forest Service grant for year three allowed Brown County communities to plant 750 trees.

Find out if a campsite is available today on the NHAL before you make the drive to the forest!

Foresters and forest products team members among many Division vacancies filled recently.

Researchers study landowner receptivity to payments for ecosystem services as a way to increase sustainable forestry practices.

Debris burning is the #1 cause of wildfires in Wisconsin. Make sure your fire is out cold before you leave it unattended!

Division boosts customer service for potential campers

The Division of Forestry began a new service for potential campers on the [Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest](#) in time for the Memorial Day weekend. Forest employees update an online page multiple times per day to let visitors know how many campsites on that forest are still open. Availability numbers include both reservable and first-come, first-serve campsites, and indicate availability for the current day. This information is also now available through the NHAL trail app for i-phones developed last year. Find the current information and a link to download the updated i-phone app on the DNR Website at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/StateForests/nhal/Campgrounds.asp>.

Division focuses on reducing vacancy rate

The Division of Forestry welcomed seventeen foresters who began their new jobs on May 20th with an orientation in Madison. The Division is also continuing to fill a number of other vacant positions.

Steve Hubbard was named team leader for [Forest Products Services](#). After earning a forestry degree from UW-Madison, Hubbard worked as a forestry technician with the Forest Service in Michigan before transferring to the Forest Products Laboratory (FPL) in Madison. He returned to UW-Madison for Masters and Doctorate degrees in Forest Science and then joined the Division in 2010 as a Forest Products Utilization and Marketing Specialist. His interests center around the life cycles of wood products and industrial process improvement strategies for Wisconsin's wood-using industry. Hubbard is excited about the opportunity to build the Forest Products Services team and operationalize the new strategic direction in this key Division program. Also joining this team as the new Forest Inventory Analyst is Andrew Stoltman. He has a Masters from UW-Madison with his thesis work on computer forest visualization. Stoltman looks forward to helping develop and implement an urban inventory and expanding the customer base and utilization of the traditional [forest inventory data](#).

Wisconsin forest landowner research results available

Several DNR specialists assisted a UW-Madison research team with a publication reporting on research describing Wisconsin's woodland owners. "Expanding Sustainable Forestry on Wisconsin Woodlands" compares those enrolled and not enrolled in the Managed Forest Law program (MFL) and focuses on the receptivity of those not enrolled in the MFL to payment for ecosystem services. Payments for ecosystem services are envisioned as a way to incentivize sustainable forestry. A [free PDF of this publication](#) is available online. See [Mark Rickenbach's blog](#) for more information.

Think your fire is out? Well, check again!

The Division's 2013 wildfire prevention campaign encourages the public to double-check for hot coals left behind from debris piles, campfires, or ashes dumped from woodstoves or fireplaces as debris burning continues to be the number one cause of wildfires in Wisconsin. In 2012, the DNR discovered that of the 345 reported debris fires, 13% were caused by individuals who obtained a proper [burning permit](#), but failed to extinguish their fire before leaving. Oftentimes, that fire still contains smoldering embers that can remain hot for day, even weeks, and wind can cause the hot embers to escape and start a wildfire.

"Wisconsin Forestry Notes" is a monthly electronic publication highlighting programs and activities of the Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry, Box 7921, Madison, Wisconsin 53707
Paul DeLong, Chief State Forester Kirsten Held, Editor, Phone: 608-264-6036

[Subscribe or unsubscribe to "Wisconsin Forestry Notes" online](#)
