

Minnesota Forest Resources Council
Landscape-Level Planning and Coordination Process
C Principles and Goals¹ C
July 1997

The Sustainable Forest Resources Act of 1995 calls for the development and implementation of a process by which locally-based interests can become engaged in identifying important strategies for sustaining large forested landscapes across Minnesota.

An especially important role of the Council in establishing this process is the identification of broad goals and principles that will provide regional committees with a context for undertaking their landscape-level coordinating responsibilities. These goals and principles are to be sufficiently well-defined to provide structure to committee actions and outcomes, yet broad enough to allow them an opportunity to exercise their own creativity and to accommodate the diverse environmental, economic and community conditions that occur with the regions for which they are responsible.

Goals

Goals are conditions or outcomes that are desired for a region's forested landscape. They are the conditions that the an engaged community of forestry interests would agree are desirable for the forests, economies and communities within a region. Goals provide a sense of direction, especially with regard to outcomes that will be accomplished over the long-term. The Forest Resources Council has established the following broad goals for use by regional committees as they carry-out their landscape-level planning and coordination responsibilities:

1. land area covered by forests within a region's landscape will be the same or larger.
2. forests within a region's landscape will be in a variety of ownerships, serving both public and private interests.
3. within forested landscapes, healthy, resilient, and functioning ecosystems will be maintained within appropriate mixes of forest cover types and age classes to promote timber production, biological diversity, and viable forest dependent fish and wildlife habitats.
4. forests within a region's landscape will be providing a full range of products, services, and values, including timber products, wildlife and tourism, that are major contributors to economic stability, environmental quality, social satisfaction, and community well-being.

————¹ Approved by the Minnesota Forest Resources Council on July 17, 1997.

5. forests within a region's landscape will be viewed by citizens as integral contributors to the quality of life enjoyed by current as well as future generations. The citizenry will be knowledgeable about forest conditions and opportunities within the region and actively engaged in their stewardship.
6. forest conditions and issues within the region's landscape will be better understood by the Minnesota Forest Resources Council through its regional committee.

Principles

Principles are standards or guidelines that guide the selection of actions that might be used to accomplish agreed to goals. They help decide which of many actions or activities will be most useful in accomplishing a region's landscape-level goals. For sure, they are not set forth as actions (or policies or programs), but simply provide a structure for the way decisions about landscape-level planning and coordination might occur. Principles are also useful in guiding the process that is used to identify certain actions. The Forest Resources Council has established the following principles for use by regional committees as they carry-out their landscape-level planning and coordination responsibilities:

Principles Guiding the Selection of Strategies

Landscape coordinating actions ...

1. effectively address the major forest resource issues identified in the region to achieve the goals established by the regional committees.
2. respect differences in goals and objectives of public and private forest owners within a forested landscape, as well as the rights and responsibilities of forest land ownership.
3. reflect a regional landscape's broad diversity of interests and perspectives in the use, management and protection of forest resources.
4. are selected after thoughtful deliberation and careful review of a variety of potential actions (policies/programs) that might be voluntarily undertaken by landowners.
5. are guided by the most currently available, science-based information about the condition of the region's forests, economies, and communities.
6. reflect adaptive management processes that involve opportunity for continuous learning experiences.

7. are capable of being fully implemented with existing (or forthcoming) financial and professional resources.
8. will promote forest practices that improve forest ecosystem health, resiliency and productivity within forested landscapes which, when aggregated, will achieve statewide goals.

Principles Guiding the Landscape Coordination Process

Landscape coordinating actions ...

1. result from cooperation and coordination among and between landowners, agencies and organizations responsible for forested landscapes.
2. result from open and continuous communication and dialogue among all parties interested in sustaining regional forested landscapes.
3. result from an engaged public that supports and has confidence in the effectiveness of the landscape-level planning and coordination process being implemented by the Minnesota Forest Resources Council through its regional committees.