

How will we do it?

In 1995 the Minnesota Legislature created the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) and gave it the job of ensuring that Minnesota's forests are able to meet the state's economic, environmental, and social needs now and in the future.

Recognizing the need to manage forests on a large scale, the MFRC set up a landscape-level forest resources program. A team of 50 individuals divided the forested part of Minnesota into six "regional forest landscapes"—multi-county area with similar social, economic and ecological characteristics.

Regional Landscape Committees

The MFRC then brought together landowners, land managers, and others interested in forests within each landscape and gave them the job of answering three questions for their forests:

- *Where have we been, and where are we today?*
- *Where do we want to go?*
- *How will we get there?*

This brochure summarizes the Northeast Landscape Committee's response to those questions. It also provides concrete suggestions on what each of us can do to help achieve the committee's vision.



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Managing Forests at the Landscape Level

A cooperative approach to sustainability for public, private, and tribal landowners

Northeast Landscape Region



Covers:

7.3 million acres

Includes:

Carlton, Cook, Lake, and St. Louis

Teaming up for Forests



Northeast Minnesota landscape
Photo courtesy of US FS

What is landscape-level forest management?

Landscape-level forest management is when public, private, and tribal landowners and citizens cooperatively develop and carry out a coordinated plan for forests covering thousands or millions of acres.

Why is it important?

Changes in land ownership are carving Minnesota's forests into smaller and smaller parcels. Yet the benefits we seek from forests — timber, habitat, recreation, jobs, clean air and water — depend on their integrity on a much larger scale. If forests are to provide such benefits sustainably, we need to manage them in a way that reaches across ownership boundaries.



Where have we been, and where are we today?

The Northeast Landscape Region

The Northeast Landscape Region covers 7.3 million acres in Carlton, Cook, Lake, and St. Louis counties. There has been little or no net loss in forestland since before European settlement. Today, 60% of the land is forestland, 11% is covered by brush/grassland, and 27% is covered by water or wetland. While most of the historically forested areas are still forested the mix of tree species has changed.

The region's population is expected to increase slightly in the next couple of decades. Also, in the Northeast region, there is a high number of people living below the poverty line.

Key Issues and Challenges

- Fragmentation of private forestlands, especially along lakeshores
- Higher tourism impact
- Ecosystem sustainability
- Diverse ownerships of forestlands
- Sustainable harvest of timber
- Threat of wildfire
- Balancing ecological, economic, and social concerns

Desired Future Conditions of the Northeast Landscape

In 100 years, the Northeast Landscape Region will have the following characteristics:

- **Native Plant Communities.** Approximates/moves toward the range of natural variability (see below) for plant communities naturally living and reproducing in northeastern Minnesota.
- **Spatial Patterns.** Has spatial patterns (see below) that are consistent with the ecology of northeastern Minnesota.
- **Diverse Habitat.** Provides diverse habitat to maintain natural communities and viable populations (see below) for the plant and animal species in northeastern Minnesota.



Forestry workshop

- **Natural Variability.** The spectrum of conditions possible in ecosystem composition, structure, and function considering both temporal and spatial factors.
- **Spatial Patterns.** The size and location of openings.
- **Viable Populations.** The ability of a wildlife or plant population to maintain sufficient size to persist over time in spite of normal fluctuations in numbers.



Forestry field work
Photo courtesy of MN DNR



Forestry tour

How will we get there?

Get People Involved!

Whether you're an interested citizen, a city or township official, a member of a lake association or other nonprofit organization, there are many ways to get involved. Remember, **you don't have to be a forester to be concerned about — and do something about — sustaining and managing our state's forests.**

How can I get involved?

Here are two initial steps for getting involved and learning more about the Northeast Landscape Program:

- Visit www.frc.state.mn.us and review a copy of the **Northeast Landscape's Forest Resource Management Plan** to learn more about the value of landscape planning, as well as the specifics of the Northeast Plan.
- Incorporate appropriate landscape planning goals, objectives and action steps at your site.

Many more opportunities for **active involvement** are available to you on the MFRC Website and in the Northeast Landscape Plan.

For more information, visit the following websites:

MFRC: www.frc.state.mn.us
DNR: www.dnr.state.mn.us
MFA: www.mnforest.com

