

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 areas 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 Southeast 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.



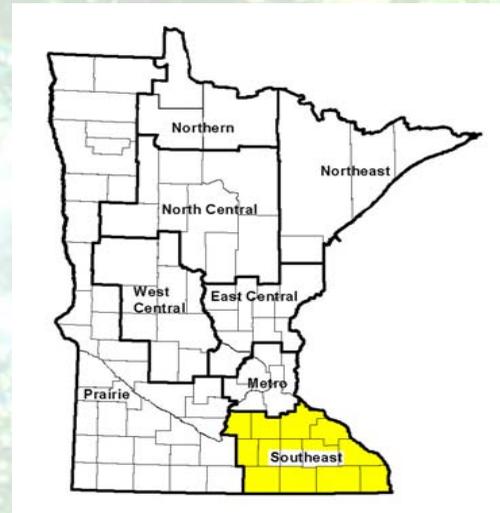
2003 Upper Buford Circle
St. Paul, MN 55108-6146



Managing Forests at the Landscape Level

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

Southeast Landscape Region



Covers:
6.7 million acres

Includes:
Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Le Sueur, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, and Wi-



Teaming up for Forests



View from Hoosier Ridge
Photo courtesy of TNC

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 Southeast Landscape Region

The Southeast Landscape Region covers approximately 6.7 million acres in Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Le Sueur, Mower, Olmsted, Rice Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, and Winona counties. The Southeast landscape has lost much of its forestland since European settlement. Much of the forestland has been converted to cropland.

The region's population is expected to increase rather dramatically in the upcoming years with most counties above the statewide average in terms of poverty level.

Key Issues and Challenges

- Relatively large population growth expected
- Land development pressures resulting from growth
- Fragmentation of forests
- Maintenance of natural ecosystems
- Environmental awareness and public participation
- Loss of biodiversity

Desired Future Conditions of the Southeast Landscape

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

- **Healthy Riparian Corridors.** Streams, lakes, and wetlands are surrounded by healthy riparian vegetation and dominated by native species. Timber harvest and rural and urban development are restricted close to water resources; diversity of habitat and animals is promoted on private and public lands.
- **Viable Landowner Incentives.** Cost-share, incentive, and tax break programs that provide economically viable options to promote forest management are available for landowners.
- **Well-Educated, Active Community.** Community and citizen groups are active in forest management, monitoring, and restoration.
- **Sustainable Management.** Best management practices (BMPs) are emphasized in forest management activities. Education on proper implementation of BMPs is provided to contractors, developers, landowners, loggers, managers and monitoring of their success is performed.
- **Healthy Landscape.** Natural plant communities and regionally significant areas have been sustained. Native species are protected and maintained. Exotic and invasive species are identified and minimized through proper forest management. Landowners, citizens, private organizations and public agencies work together to ensure proper management of forest resources Southeastern Minnesota's unique environment.



Root River



Southeast blufflands landscape

How will we get there?

Get People Involved!

Whether you're an interested citizen, a city or township official, or 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 Southeast Landscape Program:

- Visit www.frc.state.mn.us and review a copy of the **Southeast Landscape's Forest Resource Management Plan** to learn more about the value of landscape planning, as well as the specifics of the Southeast Landscape 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 Southeast 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

