

CELEBRATING
25 YEARS



Minnesota Forest Resources Council

History and Early Years

PRESENTED BY MIKE KILGORE

Professor & Head, Dept. of Forest Resources, University of Minnesota

1/19/2021



www.mn.gov/frc

Minnesota Forestry in the 1980's: How it all Started...

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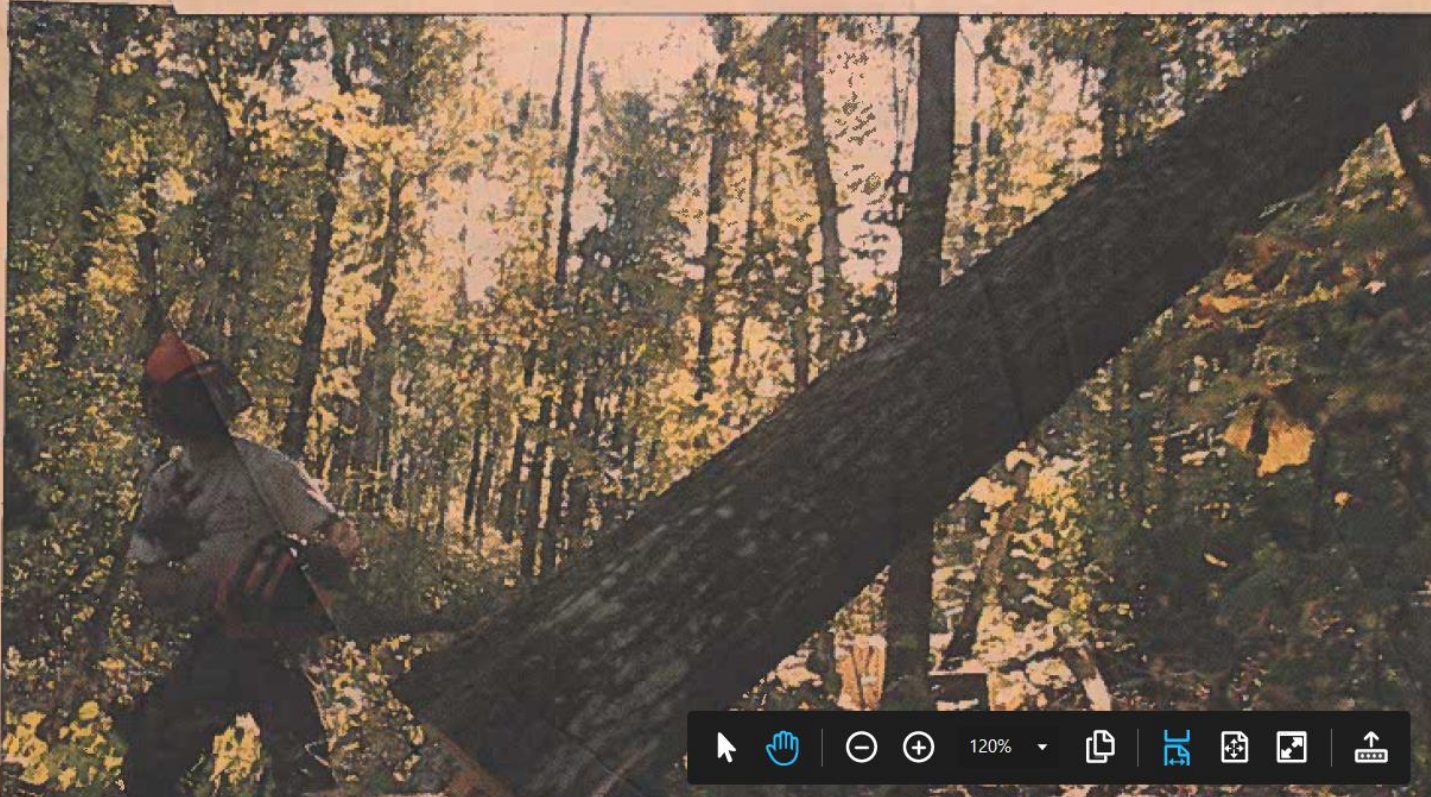


- **Rapidly expanding MN wood fiber demand.**
- **Several planned or announced wood products manufacturing facility expansions.**
- **Limited information on timber harvesting impacts to forest resources.**
- **No forum for stakeholder-based input on forest policy.**

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FUTURE OF OUR FORESTS



Saving vs. using trees: Conflict is deep-rooted

By Craig Lincoln
News-Tribune staff writer

Over the past year, loggers, environmentalists and foresters have walked the woods, talked for days in committee meetings and studied thousands of pages of studies, trying to craft a consensus about the future of Minnesota's forests.

They are guided by a timber study completed earlier this year, perhaps the most comprehensive one completed in the United States. They hope to balance

Hearings on Forestry in Minnesota Late 1980's

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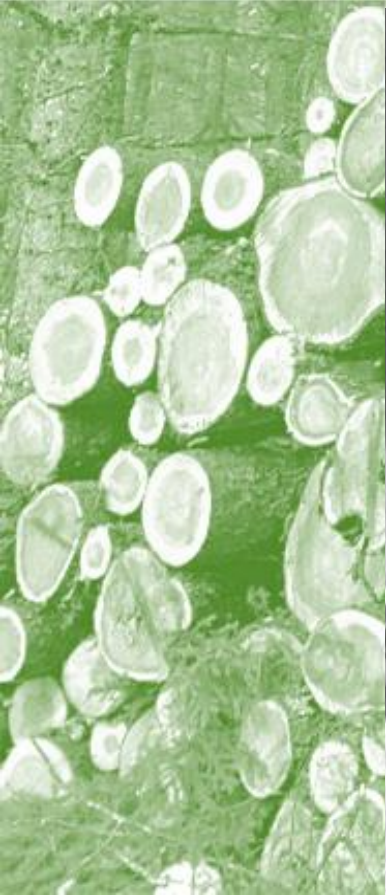
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Hearings on Forestry in Minnesota Late 1980's

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Environmental Quality Board Hearings on Need for Forestry GEIS

1989



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Timber Harvesting GEIS



- **Most comprehensive state-level assessment of forest management impacts undertaken.**
- **Science-driven.**
- **Stakeholder oversight/input on analysis.**
- **Took 4.5 years to complete.**
- **Provided detailed understanding of biological/physical/economic impacts.**
- **Limited guidance on policies/programs needed to sustain MN's forest resources.**

GEIS Technical Papers

Biodiversity
Economics and Management
Forest Wildlife
Forest Health
Forest Soils
Forest Productivity
Forest Recreation & Aesthetics
Historical & Cultural Resources
Water Quality & Fisheries

GEIS Background Papers

Harvesting Systems
Silvicultural Systems
Public Forestry Organizations &
Policies
Recycled Fiber Opportunities
Global Atmospheric Change

JAAKKO PÖYRY
JAAKKO PÖYRY CONSULTING, INC.

Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement Study on Timber Harvesting and Forest Management in Minnesota

Prepared for:

Minnesota Environmental Quality Board
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

April 1994

Prepared by:

Jaakko Pöyry Consulting, Inc.
560 White Plains Road
Tarrytown, NY 10591
TEL: 914-332-4000
FAX: 914-332-4411

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\$1 million study breeds only disagreement

By John Myers
News-Tribune staff writer

In 1989, Jim Woehrle of Floodwood and Bob Lohman of Little Falls fought a five-month battle to force the state to take a good, hard look at its forests.

Woehrle and Lohman fought with the timber industry. They fought with state agencies. They even fought with other environmentalists.

Yet, in what appeared to be proof that a couple of concerned citizens could make a difference, they won.

The state spent \$1 million to take stock of how many

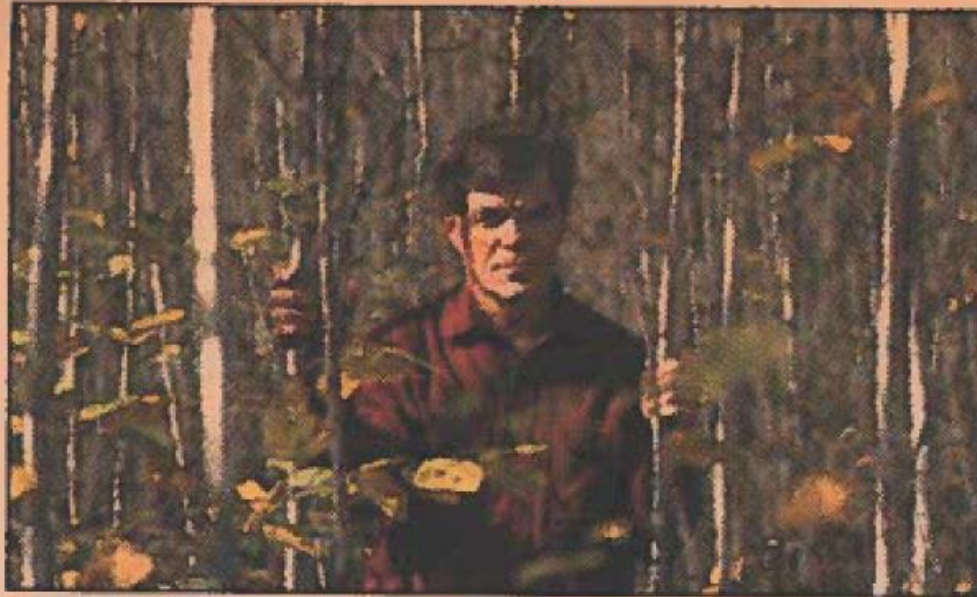
■ Committee's lack of results frustrates many.
Page 8A.

trees were in the woods, how many were being cut and how many will be available in the future as paper mills, board plants and sawmills demand more wood.

Five years later the study of our trees and the region's largest industry is over. Experts slowly are digesting the information. But there appears to be little action in any specific direction.

While the experts debate

Please see **Study**, Page 7A



Jim Woehrle stands in an area clear-cut five years ago. The aspen constrict slower-growing trees like oak and maple, producing an area with just one species of trees. Woehrle contends that this is what Minnesota's forests will look like if loggers keep cutting at the present rate.

GEIS Implementation Roundtable

- Forest resource policies / programs/ practices were identified by stakeholder- based roundtable over 9 months.
- Stakeholder council identified to oversee policy, program, and practice development.

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8A — Duluth News-Tribune, Sunday, Oct. 2, 1994

FUTURE OF OUR FORESTS

Committee created for compromise is big in size and cost, short on solutions

By John Myers

some say too large — probably

Sustainable Forest Resources Act



- Roundtable recommendations converted to draft legislation.
- Bipartisan support for proposed SFRA legislation in both houses and by Governor Carlson.
- SFRA bill introduced & passed in one legislative session (1995).
- Chapter 89A was nearly identical to draft SFRA bill introduced.

Session Summary

NEW LAWS 1995

Minnesota House of Representatives
Public Information Office



ENVIRONMENT

Environmental spending law

State spending for environmental and natural resource programs will total \$572.2 million over the next two-year budget cycle.

The governor signed the law but line-item vetoed \$445,000 worth of spending from the proposal.

The law funds the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Minnesota Zoo and 10 other state agencies.

Nearly 55 percent of the state spending in the law — \$317.8 million — went to the DNR effective May 25, 1995. (Sec. 5)

The MPCA, the next largest recipient, received \$78 million effective May 25, 1995. (Sec. 2)

Lawmakers appointed to a joint House-Senate conference committee worked out differences in the bills passed by their respective bodies and pared \$600,000 off the DNR operations budget, and \$150,000 from the MPCA.

These budget cuts could translate into layoffs for some full-time employees.

Peder Larson, MPCA assistant commissioner, said his agency is now "figuring out how to minimize the impact" of the cuts. He said that, as a rule of thumb, each \$50,000 cut from an operating budget eliminates one full-time position.

Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee chair Rep. Chuck Brown (DFL-Appleton), who sponsored the House bill, said the spending law amounts to \$6 million less than the governor recommended.

The legislation was sponsored in the Senate by Sen. Steve Morse (DFL-Dakota). The following highlights are also included in the law. HF1857/SF106*CH220

State parks, trails, recreation areas

Effective July 1, 1995, funds for state parks and recreation areas totaling more than \$47.6 million are available, a spending increase of \$2.4 million over the previous two-year budget.

Another \$22.5 million will go to trails and waterways management programs. Included in this amount is \$4.5 million for grants to counties to maintain the state's network of snowmobile trails.

The Metropolitan Council will receive \$4.5 million for maintenance and operation of regional parks. (An additional \$4 million for the metro park system is included in the

LCMR recommendations outlined in Section 19 of the law.) Development projects in state parks will receive \$1.4 million from a water recreation account.

A \$140,000 appropriation for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1995, will replace trucks and other vehicles destroyed in a February 1995 arson fire at William O'Brien State Park.

The law directs the DNR commissioner to prepare a five-year plan for using available funds to construct or modify existing park trails for accessibility to persons with physical disabilities. At least one trail in each state park will be selected for these improvements. (Sec. 5)

Fish and wildlife

A total of \$71 million will be spent in fiscal years 1996 and 1997 on programs for lake, stream and wildlife area management. Almost all of the money comes from the Game and Fish Fund, which collects hunting and fishing license fees.

The dollars were made available May 25, 1995.

Non-game wildlife management programs receive \$1.9 million of these funds. Another \$2.6 million will be marked to fund game and fish critical habitat programs and wetlands protection under the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program. (Sec. 5, Subds. 7-8)

An additional \$3.3 million will be earmarked for RIM programs contained in the LCMR recommendations. (Sec. 19)

DNR enforcement programs will receive \$36.1 million. The DNR commissioner is directed to maintain "historic levels of overtime" — 400 hours per year — for conservation officers, and not to cut back the number of field-based conservation officers.

Effective July 1, 1995, trout and salmon anglers fishing anywhere in Minnesota will be required to buy a trout and salmon stamp in addition to a regular fishing license. Under current law, the stamp was required only for Lake Superior and designated lakes and streams. This provision is also included in the omnibus game and fish bill (Special Session: SF1). (Sec. 90)

Forest resources council

DNR forest management programs will receive \$61.2 million. The funds were released May 25, 1995. (Sec. 5, Subd. 4)

Effective July 1, 1995, a forest resources council charged with developing sustainable management practices for state forests is established under the law. The 13 members of the

and go

The law
forest resources
phase of an environmental
on timber harvesting in Minn.
Subd. 4)

Clean air and water

The MPCA, effective May 25, 1995, received \$20.3 million to clean up Minnesota lakes and rivers. It will receive another \$14 million for air pollution programs, and \$16 million for groundwater protection and solid waste management. The agency's hazardous waste programs will receive \$11.9 million. (Sec. 2)

Forest resources council

DNR forest management programs will receive \$61.2 million. The funds were released May 25, 1995. (Sec. 5, Subd. 4)

Effective July 1, 1995, a forest resources council charged with developing sustainable management practices for state forests is established under the law. The 13 members of the council will be appointed by the governor from business, labor, and environmental groups and government agencies. (Secs. 76, 78-88)

The law allocates \$1.7 million for the forest resources council and for the first phase of an environmental impact statement on timber harvesting in Minnesota. (Sec. 5, Subd. 4)



Minnesota Forest Resources Council

The Early Years

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Charged with developing:

- **Site-level timber harvesting/forest mgmt. guidelines.**
- **Landscape-level forest mgmt. planning program.**
- **Monitoring programs.**
- **Research program.**
- **and more...**

Minnesota Forest Resources Council

The Early Years



- **Each MFRC initiative (e.g., guideline development) required substantial investment:**
 - MFRC members
 - MFRC staff
 - Stakeholders
- **For example, developing MFRC's guidelines:**
 - Involved 60+ stakeholders participating in 4 multi-disciplinary technical teams
 - Took 4+ years to finalize/adopt guidelines

Minnesota Forest Resources Council

The Early Years

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- **Legislature set deadlines for MFRC's work.**
- **Considerable legislative oversight/scrutiny.**
- **Aggressive MFRC meeting schedule:**
 - Monthly / bi-monthly meetings common.
 - Multi-day meetings common.
- **Considerable visibility / media interest.**

Minnesota Forest Resources Council The Early Years

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SAINT PAUL PIONEER PRESS 2/2/97

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REGION



A group from Earth First!, including Woody Owl (right), protests at a meeting of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council. They logged a complaint about the way the council is handling tree management programs. Dotany Bob Pollock, left, spoke about the damage logging can cause to ecosystems.

Earth First! demands council end logging

DENNIS LIEN STAFF WRITER

Already under fire from some legislators, the Minnesota Forest Resources Council on Thursday had to deal with Woody the Owl and Smokey the Bear.

People dressed as the two characters, along with a dozen other members of the environmental group Earth First!, demanded an end to logging on public lands until a statewide sustainable forest management plan is developed.

The council, a 13-member group appointed by the governor to prepare a comprehensive and coordinated approach to forest management, did not respond to Earth

First's demands, including a call to stop cutting old-growth trees.

Later, the council's chairman, Paul Ellefson, tried to quell criticism from several quarters, including the Legislature, that the council is deliberating too slowly and that it doesn't have Minnesota's forests at heart.

The council, he said, has been meeting for only a year, but has had to deal with a perception it was made in 1989 for a statewide study of timber harvesting and forest management. That study led to the Sustainable Forest Resources Act of 1993, which created the council, a group representing diverse timber interests.

If a public-lands timber ban were imposed, Ellefson said, southern Minnesota's economy would be devastated. About 40 percent of the 3.7 million cords of timber harvested annually in Minnesota come from federal, state, and county lands.

"This is an expression of people's frustrations," said Ellefson, referring to the demonstration at the council's monthly meeting, the first in the Twin Cities in the past year. "They are saying, 'We love our forests. We don't want any harm to come to them.'"

Ellefson insisted the council has accomplished a great deal of work, much of it the type that isn't readily apparent. Recommendations

for voluntary timber harvesting and management guidelines, however, will not be available for many more months.

Late last year, Earth First! helped stop the projected cutting of 3,500 old pine trees near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. The U.S. Forest Service has agreed to reevaluate its decision to allow that cut.

In this instance, the group contends that unless there's a moratorium on public-lands tree cutting, there will be permanent damage to a complex ecosystem of trees, animals and songbirds.

"We're not the only species living here," said Bob Pollock, an Earth First! spokesman.

- Stakeholder trust was growing; but ebbed and flowed.
- Most MFRC members had a strong connection to their constituency.
- Regular, intense MFRC member debate on what sustainable forest management is.
- Considerable public attendance at MFRC meetings.



Minnesota Forest Resources Council The Early Years

- MFRC fulfilled its charge to develop programs required in the SFRA.
- MFRC was increasingly viewed as a credible forum for addressing state forestry issues.
- Legislative scrutiny subsided over time.

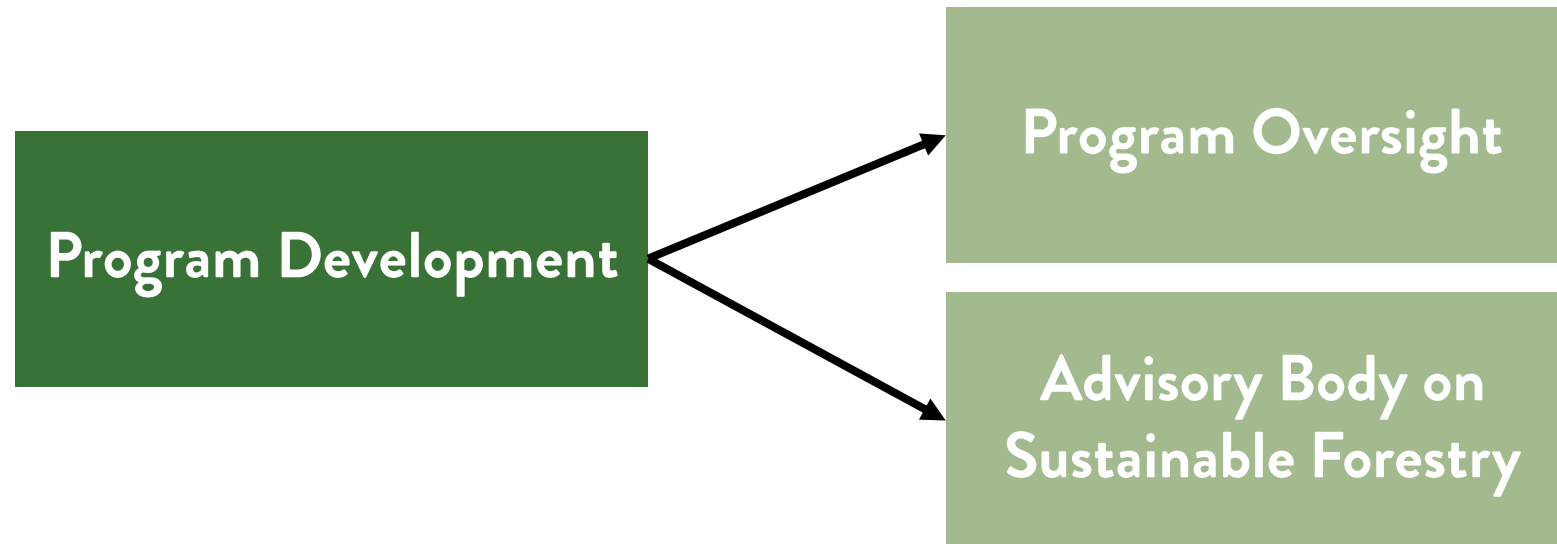
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Minnesota Forest Resources Council The Early Years

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MFRC Evolution

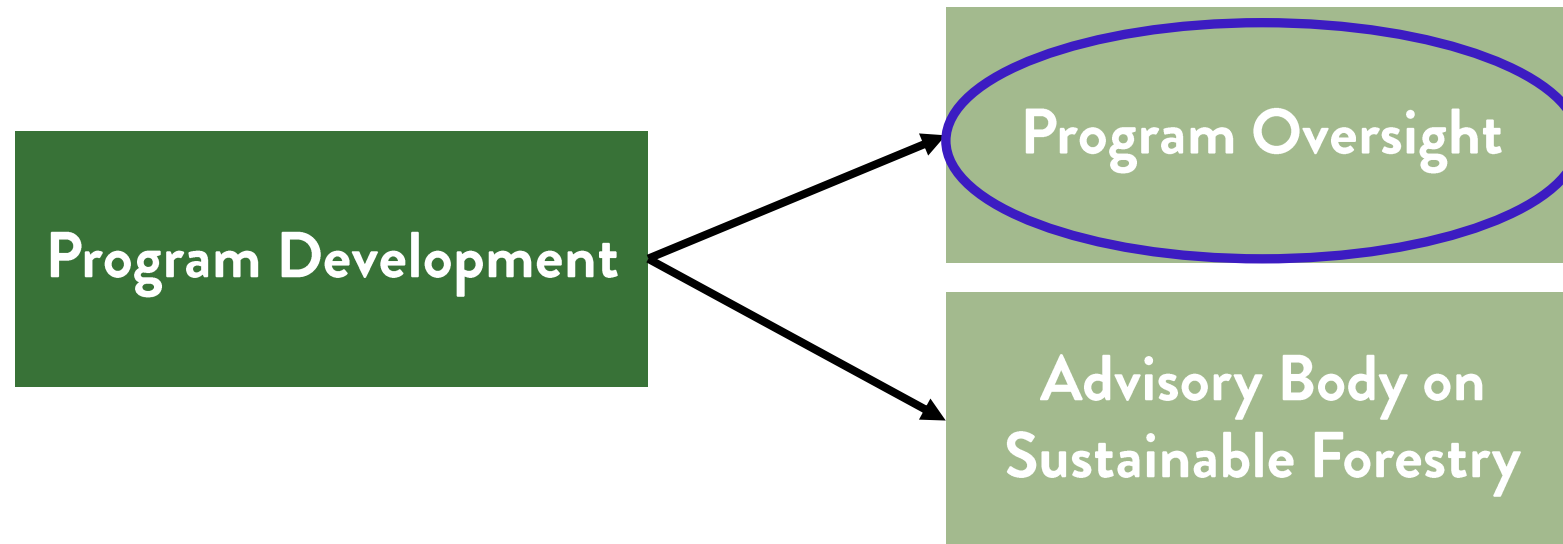


Minnesota Forest Resources Council

The Early Years

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MFRC Evolution



MFRC: Where are we now?

Site-Level Guidelines & Monitoring

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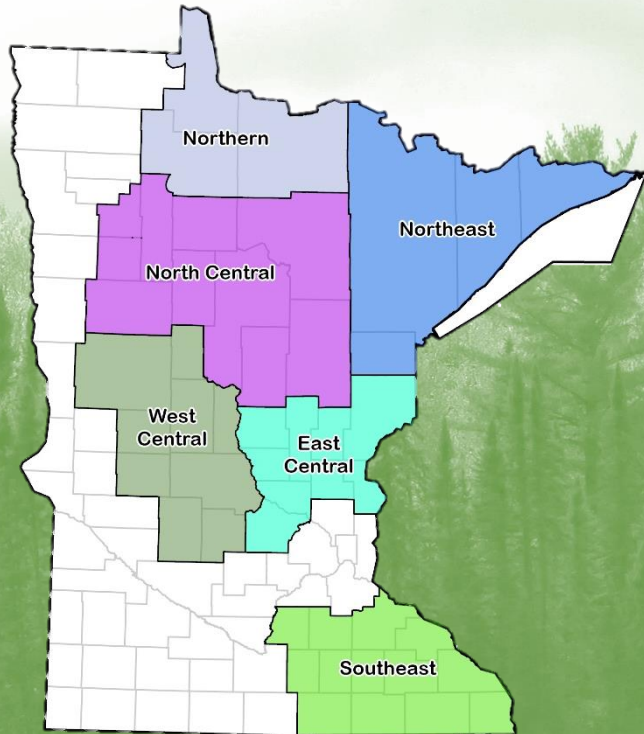
Credit: Kyle Gill

- **2 full revisions conducted since initial guideline publication in 1998.**
- **Widespread guideline implementation across state.**
- **Currently under review for possible third revision.**

MFRC: Where are we now?

Landscape Program & Regional Committees

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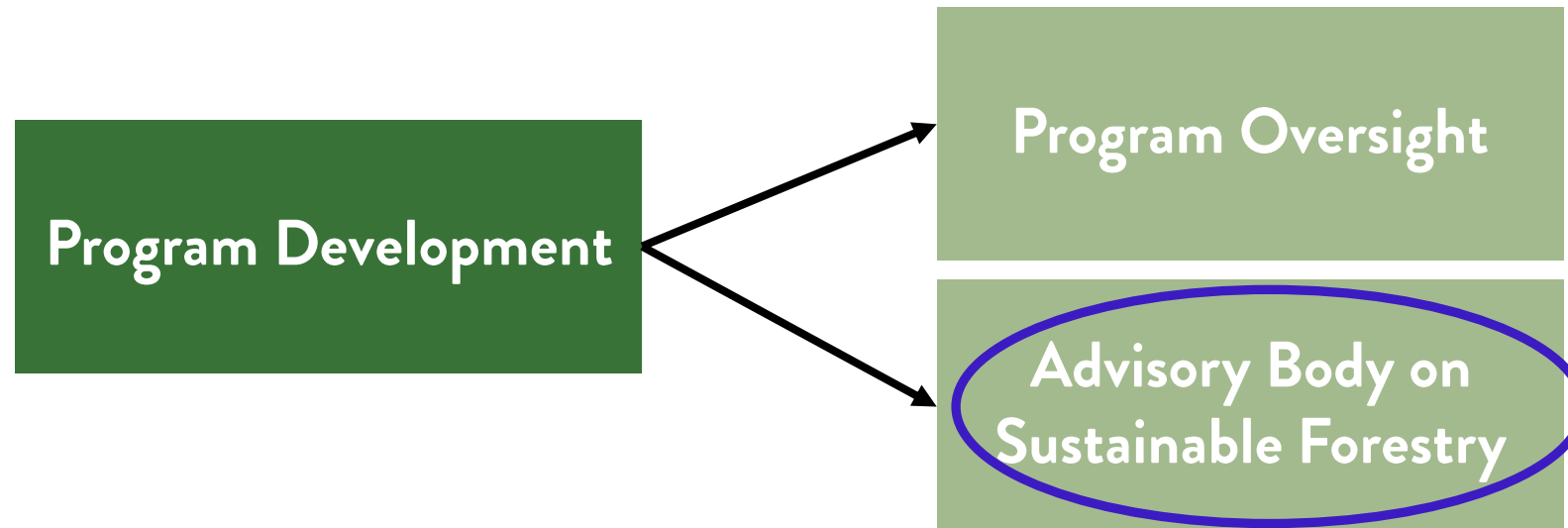


- **Currently in the cycle of regional landscape plan updates**
- **Increased emphasis on coordinating plan implementation**
- **New attention on plan monitoring and performance metrics.**

Minnesota Forest Resources Council The Early Years

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MFRC Evolution



MFRC: Where are we now? 21st Century Challenges

- Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change
- Supporting Existing and Emerging Forest Product Markets
- Responding to an Increasingly Diverse and Growing Population

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Questions?



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