

Polk County Forestry Dept

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Mission Statement:

Natural resources, such as those provided by the Polk County Forest (PCF), are the base for addressing the ecological and socioeconomic needs of society. The mission of the Polk County Forest is to manage, conserve and protect these resources on a sustainable basis for present and future generations.

PCF resources should be protected from natural catastrophes such as fire, insect and disease outbreaks, and from human threats such as encroachment, over-utilization, environmental degradation, and excessive development. While managed for environmental needs including watershed protection, protection of rare plant and animal communities, and maintenance of plant and animal diversity, these same resources must also be managed and provide for sociological needs, including provisions for recreational opportunities and the production of raw materials for wood-using industries.

Management must balance local needs with broader state, national and global concerns through integration of sound forestry, wildlife, fisheries, endangered resources, water quality, soil, and recreational practices. Management will provide a variety of products and amenities for the future through the use of sustainable forest management practices.

What is 'County Forest'?

County Forest is defined by state statute. The County Forest Law program (s. 28.11) defines and outlines the role and responsibilities of the County Forest program. Each county that contains County Forest also must adhere to a 15 year comprehensive land use plan. You can find our plan here: http://www.co.polk.wi.us/index.asp?SEC=4049AEC5-B5D9-4598-A535-07AC209F4082&Type=B_BASIC

What We Have

Polk County has 17,144 acres of County Forest. This is the 25th largest County Forest in the state of Wisconsin. The acreage is spread over 7 townships with the majority of the land located in the Towns of Sterling, Lorain and McKinley. Only 16,000 acres are actually forested, with the remaining 1,000+ acres a combination of grasslands, marshes, lakes/streams, and swamps.

Activities on the County Forest

All of the Polk County Forest is open to the public and is free to use. The forest is open to hunting, fishing, nature watching, hiking, biking and camping. There are numerous miles of designated trails as well. These trails consist of: snowmobile, ATV/UTV, snowshoe, cross country skiing, hiking (portions of the Ice Age Trail cross through), mountain biking and horse trails. The public can also purchase firewood cutting and miscellaneous gathering permits for a small fee.

Timber Management

This is an extremely important (and the most visible) activity on the County Forest. We practice sustainable forestry on the County Forest. Sustainable Forestry is the management of the Forest to meet the needs of the present without knowingly compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (economic, social and ecological)

by practicing a land stewardship ethic which integrates the growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products with the conservation of soil, air and water quality and wildlife and fish habitat. This is a dynamic process and changes as we learn from past management. All of the County Forest is certified to the standards of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI).

Polk County establishes and harvests roughly 400 acres of timber per year. These harvests consist of thinning and regeneration harvests. Timber sales are sold to the highest bidder once per year. These logging contractors are private companies which then sell the wood to multiple buyers. Wood from the Polk County Forest is used for dimensional lumber (i.e. 2x4s), paper (i.e. newspaper, toilet paper, etc), veneer, cabinetry, wood chips, OSB, firewood and numerous other products.

Since 2006, we have averaged gross revenues of \$288,017.28 per year or \$16.80/acre of County Forest. Of this money, 30% goes directly back to the townships in which County Forest is located, 20% goes to pay off any outstanding loans and the remaining goes directly back into the Polk County general fund. More often than not, after all expenses are paid, Polk County Forestry turns a profit and provides a small tax levy relief to Polk County residents.

Reforestation is another integral part of forest management on the Polk County Forest. We plant an average of over 120,000 seedlings per year since 1998.

Staff

The Polk County Forestry Department has one employee; the County Forest Administrator & Parks Assistant. The Wisconsin DNR provides approximately 500 hours per year of assistance on County Forest duties.

Forest Economy Polk County



HIGHLIGHTS

Every 10 jobs in the forest industry support 8.6 additional jobs in the county

Every million dollars of output in the forest industry creates \$597,000 output in other sectors

The forest industry provides 2% of the jobs and output in the county

Wages in the forest industry are 23% higher than the county average



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Direct Economic Effects

	Employment	Output	Value Added
Forestry and Logging	55 jobs	\$3.2 million	\$800,000
Pulp and Paper	22 jobs	\$8.5 million	\$2.1 million
Sawmills and Wood Products	324 jobs	\$50.9 million	\$20.0 million
Total	401 jobs	\$62.6 million	\$22.9 million

Employment

Jobs	401 jobs
Payroll	\$16.1 million
Total Labor Income	\$17.2 million
Indirect Employment	344 jobs

Output

Total Output	\$62.6 million
Output per Worker	\$156,000
Indirect Output	\$37.3 million

Taxes

Direct	\$300,000
Indirect Taxes	\$1.8 million

Forest Land

Total Forest Land	268,418 acres
Public Land	31,921 acres
Private Land	236,497 acres
Forest Area	44% forested

2012 data. Output is the total value of the industry in the local economy. Value added is a measure of the industry's contribution to the local community; it includes wages, rents, interest, and profits. Direct impacts are jobs, revenue, and taxes for normal business operations. Indirect includes indirect and induced impacts. It refers to the dollars industry and households spend at other area businesses and the local jobs supported by the forest industry.