Conservation Corner

*Conservation Corner is a weekly article produced by the Forest County Land &Water Conservation Department. For more information contact Steve Kircher, County Conservationist-Land Information/GIS Director at 715-478-1387 or by e-mail at* *lcc@co.forest.wi.us**.*

As the days get longer and warmer, people will start heading to the sap woods and get their sap shacks in order. In a previous article I wrote about how climate change will affect the trees in Northern Wisconsin. This week on the local news, there was a segment regarding this change and the possible impact to our maple syrup industry.

A team of natural resource managers from the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest used the Adaptation Workbook to evaluate the potential impacts of climate change on the Chequamegon-Nicolet's Twenty-mile Creek and Marengo River watershed. Impacts could make conditions less suitable to important tree species in Wisconsin, including the sugar maple, northern white cedar, and quaking aspen.

The Adaptation Workbook is a structured process to consider the potential effects of climate change and design land management and conservation actions that can help prepare for changing conditions. The Workbook was created by the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science, and this process is described in [Forest Adaptation Resources: Climate change tools and approaches for land managers, 2nd Edition](http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/52760).

The natural resource managers found that potential impacts could also affect Wisconsin's agricultural sector. Wisconsin ranks 4th in the Nation for maple syrup production, according to the 2019 Wisconsin Agricultural Statistic.

In the news segment, owner of Maple Hollow, Joe Polak, said he doesn't see it as a big problem, he's only experienced the season starting earlier than usual. "We all have to be ready sooner in the year," said Polak. "The producer has to prepare earlier than the calendar tells him."

Polak said he is concerned for areas a little further south. "It's drastic for the southern parts of the maple world, like southern Indiana, southern Ohio, and Kentucky," said Polak.

If you’d like more information about Climate Change and the Northwoods, you can access the Climate Change Field Guide for Northern Wisconsin Forests document on the Forest County Conservation website, [www.forestcountylandandwater.org](http://www.forestcountylandandwater.org). If you have questions/concerns, call 715-478-1387 or email me: lcc@co.forest.wi.us.