



Nearly half of Minnesota's forested land is privately owned. Private forest landowners contribute significantly to the forest's social, economic, and ecological benefits, including clean water and air, forest products, outdoor recreation, and wildlife habitat. The management decisions made by private forest landowners enhance these benefits for themselves and others through their engagement in caring for the health of their woods.

Minnesota's large-scale forests can be divided into two regions, the coniferous forest biome of northeast Minnesota and the deciduous forest biome that extends on a diagonal line from the southeastern part of the state to the northwest corner, with forest cover generally decreasing as one heads from the northeast southward.

Private land management for timber harvests.

Renewable, Sustainable, Beautiful!



There are approximately 200,000 family forest landowners in our state, many who manage their land for timber production.



Forest management for timber

We understand a basic truth... private land needs to pay for itself if it hopes to remain in large tracts. In some way or another the forest needs to provide benefits for the landowner. One obvious way is through the harvest of timber. Your local SWCD can help you get the most out of your woodland's timber-producing capability.

Your local SWCD wants to help you get the most out of your timber harvest. When managed properly woodlands can bring in yearly harvests. Sustainable management allows for a harvest now, and the promise of future woodlands.

TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENTS

Most woodland managers like to do timber stand improvements of some sort. Timber stand improvement options include:

- 1 *Increase timber yields by delaying the occurrence of competition for growing space between fast growing young trees. The site's wood growing potential is distributed over a few stems rather than many.*
- 2 *Increase the stand's spruce and/or cedar component by favoring those species as crop trees.*
- 3 *Removal of deformed or diseased trees.*
- 4 *Reduce the time for development of large diameter trees for timber yield (increased piece size and value). Larger diameter stems can be expected to be produced over a shorter time period when precommercial thinning is applied.*

Woodland landowners also might be able to defray ownership costs by enrolling in a woodland cost-share, tax-relief, or incentive payment program.





Protecting Your Timber Resource



You gotta fight... for your right... to harvest!

Protecting your woodland resources can be a battle. There are a number of external elements that can wreak havoc on a timber stand. Again, your local SWCD is prepared to come along side landowners to find ways to make your woodlands as resilient as they can be.



Threats to private woodland management success

Our forests are aging and becoming less healthy due to a variety of major stressors and threats:

- Fragmentation and land-use change
- The spread of insect and disease pests
- The arrival of invasive species that out-compete native species
- Wildfires
- Deer browse and earthworms, which can make it difficult to regenerate a forest
- Small- and large-scale windstorms that blow down timber
- Changing weather patterns, which may bring warmer temperatures, wetter summers and shorter periods of frozen soils during the winter, when much of the timber in our state is harvested.

Your local SWCD is ready to provide technical assistance, advice, and sometimes financial aid through cost-share opportunities to mitigate the threats to your woodlands.



Forming a plan . . .

Forest stewardship plans

A management plan can help you get the most out of your property and maximize the potential benefits for your timber harvest. Your local SWCD can help you develop a property management plan.

A Forest Stewardship Plan written by a certified plan writer, such as your local SWCD, the DNR or a private forest planner, qualifies landowners to apply for local or state tax-relief and incentive programs. To qualify for one of these programs, a landowner must generally have at least 20 qualifying acres of land.

The DNR's Forest Stewardship Program helps landowners finalize their own goals and prepare a professional, voluntary management plan for their woodland. A forest management plan (also known as a Woodland Stewardship Plan when written by a certified writer), is a non-binding, written document that lists your land's potential, what you want to accomplish, and specific actions you can take to accomplish those goals within a given time-frame.

Want to maximize your woodlands timber growth potential? Contact us to get started on a Forest Stewardship Plan

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