

FOREST HEALTH

Forest health is the condition wherein a forest has the capacity to renew itself across a landscape, recover from a wide range of disturbances, and retain its ecological resiliency while meeting current and future human needs for products, uses, and services. Since forest health can cover a wide range of issues, each individual landowner may value and address different issues on their property. When developing community plans, it is therefore important to consider what forest health issues are important within your community and develop a plan to address them in conjunction with broader forest health needs and issues.

Some Reasons to Plan for a Healthy Forest

- A healthy forest is less susceptible to diseases and the establishment of invasive plants, which can outcompete native species and disrupt the balance of a forest ecosystem.
- By identifying environmentally sensitive forestlands, we can protect the functions and values these forestlands provide to the community.
- Forests with management goals to ensure native species diversity are more likely to be resilient against human impacts such as erosion and development runoff.
- Healthy forests provide long-term recreational opportunities and resources.

Tools to Address Forest Health Across All Elements of Your Comprehensive Plan

- Identify development patterns and trends to prohibit development in environmentally sensitive forestlands.
- Develop an invasive species management plan and require invasive species control plans for all new development proposals.
- In landscaping, avoid the use of invasive species and encourage the use of native species.
- Require adequate buffers between forested lands and developments.
- Work with local organizations and across jurisdictional lines to cooperatively address forest health issues.



For more planning tools go to the
**Smart Forestry for Smart Growth
Planner's Toolbox**

on the web at

<http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/SmartForestry/toolbox/>

