

Reforestation: Take the Next Step

The strong winds which hit northwest Wisconsin in 2011 damaged many privately owned woodlots. Following a timber salvage, it is important to monitor regeneration needs and to develop a planting plan, if necessary. These steps will ensure quality timber for the future and will address multiple land use objectives, including wildlife habitat, soil stability, recreation or invasive species control. Working with a professional forester to develop a reforestation plan is highly recommended.

Do I need to plant trees following a catastrophic event?

The answer, "it depends".

The presence or absence of natural regeneration of desirable species at adequate stocking levels will influence your decision. If natural regeneration is poor, or of an undesirable species, then consider tree planting or direct seeding.



Primary timber type prior to windstorm	Planting recommendation
Jack pine or red pine	Will likely need planting
Aspen, oak or northern hardwoods	Wait two years to evaluate presence of adequate natural regeneration, if lacking consider planting

What professional assistance is available?



Department of Natural Resources (DNR) foresters and private cooperating consultant foresters are available to assist you with reforestation recommendations. Private vendors can be hired to complete the planting work or you can do it yourself. For a statewide list of foresters, visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/>, search "forester".

DNR foresters in the NW Blowdown Area

Bayfield County	Barnes Ranger Station	715-795-2565
Burnett County	Grantsburg Ranger Station	715-463-2897
	Webster Ranger Station	715-866-8201
Douglas County	Gordon Ranger Station	715-376-2299
Polk County	Balsam Lake DNR	715-485-3518
Washburn County	Spoooner Ranger Station	715-635-4084 or 715-635-4086
	Minong Ranger Station	715-466-2022

Cooperating forestry consultants*

For a list of private cooperating foresters visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/>, search "forester".

For guidelines to consider when hiring a consultant visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/>, search "writing contracts".

As with any business endeavor, it's wise to have a signed agreement that clearly articulates the services to be provided, associated costs and timing of the work.

Site preparation and tree planting services*

The Department of Natural Resources maintains a list of vendors who provide these services in each county, visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/nursery/> search "planting services" for details.

On-line personalize tree planting plan

The DNR nursery program has developed an easy-to-use tool to guide landowners in a successful tree planting project. Access to an aerial photo of the property is included. This planting plan can be printed and given to a professional forester to implement. <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/>, search "planting plan".

* Inclusion on this list does not indicate endorsement by the Department nor imply the quality of services provided.

* Reference checks are encouraged prior to signing any contract.

Where can I order seedlings?



Seedlings can be purchased from the DNR state nursery or from private businesses. Placing your order in the fall will ensure receiving the desired species and quantity.

DNR state nursery

Stock can be ordered annually beginning in October and until supplies are exhausted. For a price listing of species offered, an order form or to view stock inventories visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/nursery/>

Private nurseries*

For a list of private nurseries, visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/nursery/>, search “*private nursery*”. It’s advisable to confirm seedlings have been grown from a local, preferably Wisconsin, seed source.

What steps increase tree planting success?

Implementing a few key steps at the on-set of your reforestation endeavors will yield significant long-term dividends.

- Start with a **written reforestation plan** that identifies your short and long term **goals**.
- Determine the **costs** associated with tree planting and what financial assistance is available.
- Develop a planting **map** which identifies the acres to be planted, access routes and fire breaks.
- Select **species** compatible to your planting site and growing conditions. The DNR nursery catalog describes the site requirements for each tree and shrub species they sell. <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/nursery/>
- Complete **site preparation** prior to planting. Treatments may include a chemical/herbicide application or a mechanical treatment such as disking, scalping, or trenching.
- Determine whether **hand or machine planting** is best for your site and what service providers are available in your area.
- **Time** planting when soil moisture is high; April or May is usually the best time to plant in Wisconsin.
- **Store nursery stock** in a cool area (~ 34°) and out of direct sunlight prior to planting. Avoid exposing roots to the air for long periods of time to prevent desiccation.
- Conifers are generally planted at a rate of 800-900 seedlings per acre which represents an 8' x 7' **spacing**, with the wider distance between the rows.
- Don't walk away from your seedlings once they are in the ground. Some type of **post-planting monitoring** should be done to evaluate plantation survival rates and to assess maintenance needs. At a minimum, plantations should be evaluated 4-5 months after planting and again during the third growing season.



What financial resources are available to support tree planting?

State and federal funds are available to assist private landowners with tree planting and other resource management activities. Contact the DNR Forester in the county where the trees will be planted to sign-up.



Wisconsin Landowner Grant Program (WFLGP, state) Up to 50% of site preparation, nursery stock and labor costs can be refunded. Funds are available first-come, first-served. Applications are accepted continuously and processed February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1. For information, visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/>, search "WFLGP".

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP, federal) 50% cost sharing is available for tree planting including site preparation, planting stock, and planting costs. For information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov, search "CRP".

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP, federal) Offers up to 75% cost sharing; tree planting expenses including site preparation, planting stock, and planting costs are eligible. Maximum cost share rates are \$10,000 annually or \$50,000 per contract. For information, visit <http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov>, search "EQIP".

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP, federal) Provides cost sharing for tree and shrub plantings to benefit wildlife species. Cost sharing is 75% for items proposed in a 5-10 year contract. The maximum total cost share payment to a landowner/year is \$10,000. For information, visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>, search "WHIP".

Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP, federal) No funds are currently available for Wisconsin.

Income Tax Deductions (state and federal) Reforestation costs and timber sale revenues are eligible for federal and state tax deductions. The process can be cumbersome yet offers the savvy and informed landowner bona fide financial benefits. The National Timber Tax program <http://www.timbertax.org>, the U.S. Forest Service, and some cooperating forestry consultants provide taxation tips, visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/>, search "tax tips".

What are the regeneration requirements if my land is enrolled in a Wisconsin Forest Tax Law program?

- Wisconsin's forest tax programs include a number of **mandatory practices** which landowners are required to complete during the entry period. Two of these specifically relate to maintaining minimum stocking levels and ensuring adequate regeneration after a harvest (ch. NR 46, Wis. Adm. Code).
- Following a catastrophic event, affected landowners should contact the DNR Forester in the county where the damage occurred for specific guidelines. Salvage operations should be pursued and if adequate natural regeneration does not occur following the timber sale, landowners may be required to artificially reforest the impacted area through tree planting or direct seeding.

What educational opportunities are available?

DNR Workshops

Landowner workshops may be offered in the future. Check the Storm Recovery web page for information, visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/stormRecovery/>

University of Wisconsin Extension Service (UWEX)

UWEX is offering a *Learn about Your Land* on-line/DVD course. This six part series touches on wildlife, insects and diseases, locating property boundaries, creating trails and paths, harvesting timber and tree planting. Contact UWEX in Spooner at 715-635-7406 or visit www.woodlandinfo.org.

