

DIVISION OF FORESTRY

Division of Forestry Operations Plan



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INTRODUCTION

The Statewide Forest Assessment and Statewide Forest Strategy (2010) were the foundation of our Strategic Direction. They helped us identify with partners the major issues and concerns in forestry and what the forestry community collectively might do to address them.

In the spring of 2011, the Division of Forestry finalized our Strategic Direction with guidance and input from our staff, partners and customers. The Strategic Direction mapped out a path for DNR to take over the next five years to address those challenges that DNR is best suited to tackle.

The Operations Plan

The Operations Plan¹ (Ops Plan), presented here, describes how we will most efficiently and effectively use our limited resources to meet the intent of the Strategic Direction. Whereas the Strategic Direction explained the ways in which we will increase, maintain or decrease the varied investments in DNR forestry programs, the Operations Plan identifies where and how those changes will take place. We're allocating resources based on our niche and we've made decisions considering our partners' strengths, including the capacity of the private sector. The Plan, serving as the blueprint for the internal workings of the Division, will enable us to produce the desired outcomes.

Much of the work we currently do will continue, as these functions remain an appropriate and valued role for the Division. However, in several instances, we will be producing the same outcome, but doing it in a different way that is more efficient or effective and provides more accountability and consistency. The Operations Plan guides the Division's programs as they adapt to meet the intent of the Strategic Direction.

This document describes each of our program areas, the changes to our supervisory and organizational structure, and finally the process to align our resources and management systems. In the document, we provide links to several maps that will visually explain the proposed allocations.

DIVISION PROGRAM OPERATIONS

The Nature of Our Work

The Division of Forestry has what we are, for purposes of this plan, calling "Integrated" and "Specialized" programs. What distinguishes the Specialized Programs from the Integrated Programs is the nature of how we staff the work within the Division. The Integrated Programs-- Private Forests, County Forests, Fire Protection, and State Lands -- are comprised of a workforce that accomplishes outcomes for a combination of the four programs. In most cases, staff will have responsibilities for 2-4 of the program areas. In the Specialized Programs -- Forest Products Services², Forest Health, Urban Forests, Nurseries, & Cross-Program Activities (service functions) - employees are primarily responsible for the work of their program. There is, of course,

¹ As stated in the Division's final Strategic Direction (May 2011), the Department recognizes Native Americans' off-reservation treaty rights, sovereignty over tribal land and access to public lands to exercise their gathering rights. These rights will be recognized as we implement our plan.

² Previously referred to as Utilization & Marketing

collaboration across all programs within the Division, as well as with other DNR programs. The use of the terms “integrated” and “specialized” refers only to how the work is assigned to employees.

Specialized Programs

Forest Products Services (previously referred to as Utilization & Marketing)

In order to increase the Division’s capacity to provide assistance to wood-producing and wood-using companies around the state, we will increase our efforts to provide industry analysis, information and guidance regarding forest resource availability and demand, market trends and opportunities (both local and international), harvesting and transportation efficiencies, and manufacturing process improvements.

To do this the Division has allocated resources to fund three additional Industry Specialists. In the coming year the Division will work with representatives from all sectors of the forest industry to determine what type of assistance and expertise is most needed. Based on this input the Division will determine the skills, competencies and locations that will best address the needs identified.

Forest Health

In 2005, the Forest Health Program conducted a study of its program which along with partner input evaluated the appropriate role for the Forest Health Program. As a result of that study, the Forest Health Program shifted its focus to provide increased emphasis on invasive species. This direction was affirmed in the Strategic Direction. As a result, no significant changes will be made in the allocation and use of resources. Staff is allocated across the state as depicted in the [Forest Health Staff Zones map](#).

Urban Forests

The Strategic Direction indicated that the Urban Forest program will shift its emphasis from a public “street tree” model to an integrated “community canopy” model that better reflects how we can maximize the public benefits from all trees and forests in our communities. To facilitate this shift a position will be allocated for an Urban Forestry Partnership Specialist. In addition, resources will be allotted to fund an Urban Inventory and Assessment System.

The urban forestry grant program will continue to be funded at its current level to enable the communities, primarily through multi-community partnerships, to leverage local resources. Staff is allocated across the state as depicted in the [Urban Forests Staff Zones map](#).

Nurseries

The Nursery program is scaling production and staffing to meet seedling demand. Since the demand for seedlings has decreased, the Griffith and Wilson nurseries will produce the needed supply of 5-8 million seedlings annually. The Hayward Nursery will no longer produce seedlings at the Hayward facility; existing seedling inventory at Hayward will be lifted by the spring of 2013. The Hayward facility will continue to conduct statewide tree seed extraction and serve as a seedling distribution center. Additional uses for the Hayward facility are being evaluated, including: reforestation test area, new seed orchard site, and share cropping, among others. In addition, the Division is working with external partners to explore public/private partnership

possibilities for specialized seedling production using the Hayward facility. The distribution territories for each nursery are depicted in the [Nurseries Distribution Zones map](#).

State nursery staff will continue to provide technical reforestation expertise to both public and private sectors. Partnerships and technology transfer will be expanded with Wisconsin's private nursery growers. The Division is increasing its investment in the reforestation monitoring program and will disseminate findings and recommendations to internal and external customers.

Cross-Program Activities (Service Functions)

Forest Sciences: The work we do in silviculture, forest ecology and hydrology will continue with two additional positions allocated to address forest economics and genetics.

Research: We will continue to invest resources in both internal DNR research capacity and other research institutions, most notably the University of Wisconsin.

IT/GIS: To more effectively and economically deliver IT/GIS service to our customers and more efficiently accomplish our work through the implementation of new technology and applications, we will allocate four positions to address the increased demand for technology development, application and training, and two additional positions to address district-specific needs.

Outreach & Education: We will evaluate our outreach and education efforts to ensure that we are making the most efficient use of the investments that address all aspects of forestry, rural and urban. Within the coming year, the Division will develop a specific strategic direction, with the input of staff and partners, which will guide the Division's future outreach and education work and investments.

Workforce Development: We will continue our commitment to hiring and training a quality workforce and will add a position to lead learning in the Division, including technical training but also non-technical learning such as leadership development.³

Forest Certification: We will continue to allocate resources and staff time to our work in forest certification to ensure that Wisconsin's forest industry maintains its competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

Assistance to Other Divisions: We will maintain our allocation of time and resources spent assisting other DNR programs and work with them to identify how we maximize the value we provide. Similarly, we will work with those programs to identify priority activities for which they assist the Forestry Division.

³ Based on the Division's experience with intensive hiring processes over the last year, FLT determined that in the Strategic Direction we had not allocated sufficient staff to sustain the full hiring and training program over time. To increase resources above the level in the Strategic Direction process, FLT reallocated a position currently vacant within the Bureau of Forestry Business Services to provide a Learning Manager position.

Integrated Programs

Major Shifts in our Integrated Programs

- **Enhanced Integration:** There will be a higher degree of integration. For example, more foresters will have a fire assignment to increase efficiency in use of staff, improve safety, provide more flexibility to ensure continued adherence to work/rest guidelines, and reduce overtime costs.
- **Shifting Workload:** A number of forestry technician positions are shifting to forester positions, reflecting the change in our work over time, particularly the shift in private forestry in which we perform less direct service and more oversight of work conducted by our private sector partners engaged in MFL planning and implementation.
- **Consolidated Law Enforcement:** We will maintain the current investment in fire safety and law enforcement efforts; however, in order to be more effective and efficient, law enforcement work will be consolidated into a smaller number of positions, each with the full breadth of law enforcement responsibilities for the Division of Forestry. Proficiency in law enforcement is difficult to achieve when enforcement activities are not a sizable percentage of an employee's work. We will achieve better proficiency as well as improve the match between employee talents and interests by focusing this work. This change implements a recommendation from the 2005 Forestry Law Enforcement Study.

Fire Protection

The fire landscape map developed as part of the 2010 Fire Program Assessment was used to allocate resources based on level of hazard. As a result, some equipment and staff were shifted away from low risk areas to high risk areas. This will enable the Division to more efficiently prepare for, detect, and suppress forest fires.

In order to strengthen the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) program as directed by the Strategic Direction, three positions are allocated to address WUI related needs since the risk associated with WUI is growing and needs to be dealt with in an organized and consistent way. Having personnel in the highest risk landscapes with a focus on this need will enhance the effectiveness of our program's response. This allocation of resources is also consistent with the recommendation of the 2010 Fire Program Assessment.

We will also pursue several options for cost savings such as alternative scheduling (e.g. 7-day scheduling), and establishing ~~one core~~ "Type 3" incident management ~~short~~ teams (IMT) ~~(10-15 members)~~ per ~~Forestry district~~ area in organized protection for rapid response, along with maintaining a minimum of four district expanded teams. This approach balances the need for a shorter team locally, while still providing for an expanded team for larger and longer term incidents in a district.⁴ The change in IMT's is also consistent with 2010 Fire Assessment recommendations.

⁴ Revision made on 11/15/13

As directed by the Strategic Direction, the Division will eliminate exclusive use contracts for the SEAT program while maintaining our current investment in providing Forest Fire Protection (FFP) grants to local fire departments to assist in suppressing and preventing wildland fires.

Funding for training will be maintained at current levels in order to continue our commitment to meeting established national and state training standards for wildland and prescribed fire.

County Forests

The Strategic Direction reduced the amount of assistance given to the County Forestry Program. To assist counties in adjusting to the changes a new framework for how we provide service to the county forests was developed in partnership with the Wisconsin County Forest Association. Now individual counties can select, within budgetary constraints, from offered resources that best meet the needs of their particular county.

As key partners in forest management, and as directed by the Strategic Direction, we will continue to provide liaison support to each county. In addition, resources will be provided for planning, reforestation, inventory and timber sale assistance, fiscal support for counties to hire professional expertise, grants for forest and wildlife management practices, coordination and management of third party forest certification (i.e. FSC, SFI), loans for land acquisition and management needs, and annual acreage payments for land within the program.

State Lands

We are allocating resources to accomplish forest management activities on all state lands as identified in property master plans. The Division will continue to meet allowable harvest goals as determined through the master planning process on all state lands. The Division will also continue to work on reducing the current backlog of forest management practices.

Through implementation of the Strategic Direction the Division will increase the number of lump-sum timber sales. And where it is cost effective, the Division will contract cooperating consulting foresters to establish a portion of timber sales in order to maximize DNR's ability to accomplish workload priorities across the Division.

The Division increased the amount of funds for reforestation on all state lands, ensuring adequate resources to meet identified reforestation needs.

Additional resources were allocated to state forests so they can enhance unique niche recreation activities such as remote camping and trails and serve high demand recreation facilities while continuing to provide for visitor safety. In doing so, the Division will be implementing recreation priorities articulated in property master plans. A shift was also made to increase the number of FTE law enforcement officers to better serve the public.

The Division increased resources allocated to land surveys and workload associated with property boundary issues such as trespasses and newly acquired land.

Resources dedicated to planning efforts are being reduced due to the pending completion of state forest master plan revisions. Focus will be shifted to assisting other DNR programs with the planning needs for other state lands.

Privately Owned Forest Lands

The Managed Forest Law (MFL) is a major tool the state uses to keep forests as forests, providing sustainable management that produces an array of public benefits. As a result, we will continue to make a significant investment in this program. However, over the next five years we will reduce the amount of time spent on its administration. Time savings will be realized through efficiencies from increased automation (Wisconsin Forest Inventory & Reporting System (WisFIRS) computer system) and a shift towards an increased use of audits, rather than individual reviews, to monitor program compliance. In addition, we are undertaking a thorough evaluation of the administrative processes within the program to generate additional time savings.

As time savings are realized from reduced MFL administration, we will shift resources and staff time to increase our efforts to reach a greater number of private forest landowners who receive no professional assistance in caring for their forest land. We will work with partners to pilot different techniques for reaching private landowners and then evaluate the level of success achieved with each investment.

In order to address increasing workload associated with managing conservation easements on working forest land, an additional position has been allocated for administration and monitoring.

Division Resource Allocation Maps

- The [Division of Forestry Strategic Direction Staff Allocation](#) map shows where staff will be located in the state after the Strategic Direction has been implemented. Supervisory positions and staff positions that work at the Area, District or multi-District scale are included in the call-out boxes. All other positions are included on the map.
- The [Division of Forestry Strategic Direction Fire Equipment](#) map shows the location of fire equipment after the Strategic Direction has been implemented.
- The [Nursery Distribution Zones map](#) shows which counties each nursery distributes seedlings to.
- Staffing zone maps have been developed for the Division programs with staff who are assigned groups of counties. These include:
 - [Law Enforcement](#)
 - [Urban Forestry](#)
 - [Forest Health](#)

SUPERVISORY AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The following section describes the management and organizational structure changes in the Operations Plan. We developed our management structure only after we determined how best to allocate our staff resources to accomplish our priority work. The Forestry Leadership Team believed that we had to first determine the extent and nature of staffing in various parts of the state before we could assess how many supervisors we need to most efficiently deliver program.

The [Forestry Supervisory Structure map](#) shows the new organizational structure for the Division of Forestry's integrated programs, including all District, Area, and Team boundaries.

'Right-sizing' our Regions (now Districts)

Currently there is a large disparity in the number of employees in our regions. In 2009, we had five regions that ranged in size from 7 to 183 permanent employees. In 2010, we combined the South Central and Southeast Regions to begin to address the imbalance. Through the Operations Plan, we will take further strides to improve our organizational structure. We will be adjusting the boundaries and maintaining the reduction from the five regions to four districts (the term all Divisions in DNR will now be using for the largest geographic units), ranging in size from 49 to 113 permanent employees. We feel that the new four district organizational structure, which better balances staff and geography, will help improve consistency and accountability in program delivery across the Division.

Supervisory Structure

The new organizational structure will have fewer supervisors overall. Under the Operations Plan, 59 of the current 65 supervisory positions will continue to be used for supervisory positions. Although there will be a total of 64 supervisory positions in the new structure, five are the result of reframing existing coordinator/manager positions to include supervisory responsibilities.

Nearly 75% of our employees work within our Integrated Programs, producing outcomes in both forest management and fire protection. Staff assigned to work within or between counties will report in geographic teams. Teams will continue to report to Areas, which will report to the four Districts. The new structure reduces the number of Areas from 14 to 11 and eliminates one fire dispatch group.

Staff in the Specialized Programs (Forest Products Services, Forest Health, Urban Forests and Nurseries), will now report to a program supervisor within our Bureau structure, similar to how the aeronautics program has functioned since coming to the Division. For example, currently the Forest Health staff report to several different positions depending on where they are located. Now all Forest Health staff will be part of one team which will report to one supervisor, a Team Leader, responsible for the management of that program. This change in supervisory structure was made to:

1. Provide a consistent structure for all Specialized Program supervision in the Division;
2. Increase consistent statewide program implementation;
3. Increase the ability of the program to implement new direction;
4. Increase the ability of leadership to monitor program direction and implementation; and

5. Improve the efficient use of supervisor time.

ALIGNMENT OF RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

The process to align our workforce and our management systems will not be completed all at once. We will implement portions of the alignment and other program improvements as opportunities arise, primarily over the next couple of years, but in some cases longer-term.

One aspect of the Operations Plan that will be implemented on a certain date is the supervisory structure. We intend to shift to the new structure at the beginning of the next fiscal year, July 1, 2012. Other changes, such as administrative efficiencies in the Managed Forest Law program, will gradually be phased in over the next three years so that we will be able to meet the intent of the Strategic Direction within five years. Implementation of staff changes will depend on the particular circumstances of each position and the affected employees. Our goal is to achieve the program intentions as quickly as possible while minimizing employee disruption, to the extent possible.

Workforce Alignment

We are currently working with the Bureau of Human Resources to identify the processes by which supervisors and staff will transition to the new organization and new locations. Although we do not yet know many details about the processes that will be used for the alignment, we will share them as they are developed. We are committed to open communications throughout this alignment process. We want employees to understand what is happening and to be able to make well-informed decisions.

- There will be no layoffs of employees in this alignment process, but there will be considerable change for some employees, including change of duties and, in some cases, change of location.
- Our goal is to minimize disruption as much as possible.
- All integrated position descriptions will be updated in a process coordinated by the Forestry Operations Team (FOT).
- We will use a combination of direct appointments, lateral transfers, and competitive open recruitment to move existing staff when needed and to fill new positions.
- We will follow civil service rules and protocols.
- We will encourage employees to explore and express preferences for new opportunities that play to their strengths.
- Limited term employee positions in some cases will not be changed, in some cases will be replaced by permanent positions, and in some cases will be eliminated. Current supervisors will work directly with affected staff to clarify their particular situation.

Alignment of Management Systems

Along with aligning our workforce and equipment, we will also work on aligning our management systems to support the implementation of the Strategic Direction. Management systems include the ways we set priorities, plan our work, define our positions, hire and develop

our workforce, measure our accomplishments, hold ourselves accountable, lead the program forward, and stay focused on achieving mission. Our management systems can be better integrated and coordinated, and implementing the Strategic Direction is a perfect time to make those improvements. For example:

- Improving communications through routine contact with supervisory chain is critical.
- We will clarify the membership, roles, & functions of Forestry Leadership Team, Forestry Operations Team, Working Groups, and Specialist Teams.
- Budgets will be aligned with our new teams and refocused program investments.
- Work planning, accomplishment reporting, and activity codes will be refocused and better integrated into one system.
- The Department's new performance review system will be customized for the Division and will be better integrated with Division-wide performance measures, succession planning, and staff/leadership development.

Facility Consolidation

The Department has multiple facilities in a number of Wisconsin counties. In many cases, the Division has staff in two or more facilities within a county due to the location of work and for rapid fire response. As part of the Operations Plan process, the Division identified five counties that warranted further evaluation for possible facility consolidation, either within a county or with an adjacent county.

The Division engaged local units of government and other affected interests as part of this evaluation. The criteria included: the cost of operations (such as facility and travel costs), the efficiency of accomplishing our priority work, and the effectiveness of our emergency response. We assessed facilities in the following counties:

Ashland County

Currently there are NOR forestry personnel in 3 facilities servicing Ashland County – Mellen Ranger Station (4 forestry staff and 1 non-forestry DNR staff); Ashland Service Center (1 forestry staff and more than 20 other DNR staff); and Washburn Ranger Station (2 forestry staff).

The Division's forestry field needs are in Washburn rather than Ashland. The factors include: proximity to county forestry staff for Bayfield County liaison, Red Cliff Band Chippewa, US Forest Service in Washburn and northern Bayfield County private forestry needs. Fire response times in the higher fire hazard areas of northern Bayfield County are faster coming from Washburn than from Ashland. Key partner agencies are located in Washburn and being in close proximity to these partners (Bayfield County Forestry and USFS) provide for more efficient work coordination when compared to Ashland. Warm storage facilities at Washburn are on the list of requests for capital improvements. There are opportunities to look into co-locating storage facilities with partner agencies in Washburn.

The Mellen Ranger Station is a relatively new, leased facility and the lease is currently being renewed for 5 years (beginning January, 2012). Facilities and lands staff are looking into a possible option to purchase. The Mellen Ranger Station is currently located in a desirable spot

for responding to wildland fires in Ashland County. One Federal, two State highways and a major County highway that run out of Mellen makes accessibility for fires optimal for the central and southern portion of Ashland County as well as northern Iron County. This station location is also centrally located to service private land owners in Ashland County.

Decision: In order to locate staff closer to priority work, the Division intends to move personnel (one Forest Technician) from the Ashland Service Center to the Washburn Ranger Station and build a warm storage garage in Washburn. This change will also result in cost efficiencies due to reduced vehicle mileage and elimination of facility rent. We will continue our presence at Mellen in the current Ranger Station, preferably with an ability to purchase.

Anticipated timeline for moving from Ashland to Washburn is by July 1, 2012.

Langlade County

Langlade County has a Service Center at Antigo (7 field forestry personnel) and a Ranger Station at Langlade (1 Forester and 1 Forest Technician). The Langlade Ranger Station is DNR owned, but is 30 years old and beginning to need costly preventative maintenance. It is planned that in the 2011-13 biennium \$26,000 will be spent on maintenance alone. The building will be scheduled to be replaced in about 20 years. Due to its location, it is believed that it will be attractive to commercial interests.

Locating the Forester in Lakewood will position it in the middle of the highest risk area in Fire landscape 7. In addition, this move will strengthen the DNR/Federal partnership in the areas covered by the Reciprocal Forest Fire Protection Agreement on the National Forest, improve communications, and provide private forestry assistance to forest landowners in Northern Oconto County.

Locating the Langlade Forest Technician position in Antigo will place it nearer the larger year round forest management workload. Currently, on high fire days, the Langlade Technician prepositions forest fire equipment in northern Oconto County in the village of Mountain which is south of Lakewood. If the Technician position is moved to Antigo, prepositioning would continue, but the Technician will be coming from a farther distance (Antigo). Although the location of the Technician in Antigo does not improve fire response, it is not a significant change from current practices.

Decision: The Langlade Ranger Station will be closed. The Forestry Technician position and the Type 4 Engine/Tractor Plow will be located in Antigo. The Langlade Forester position and the Type 6 Engine will be located in Lakewood which is located in northern Oconto County. Further use of the facility will be evaluated.

The Forester position will be placed in Lakewood and the Forestry Technician position will be transferred to Antigo after July 1, 2012.

Manitowoc County

The Mishicot field station is located less than 9 miles north of the contact station at Point Beach State Forest. Both stations serve Manitowoc County residents. There is currently 7 DNR staff from 4 Divisions located at Mishicot including the DNR forester. The Department currently pays nearly \$71,000 annually for rent at the Mishicot facility. Discussions are occurring between

Divisions to find a solution to close the Mishicot field station and relocate DNR staff to other offices.

Decision: Due to continued proximity to priority work and significant Department cost savings, the Forester position will be relocated to Point Beach State Forest, if suitable office space can be secured there.

The high cost of maintaining the rent for this facility is motivating all the Divisions to close the Mishicot field office as soon as possible. Meetings are scheduled in January 2012 to define those options.

Monroe County

Two forester positions are located in a leased facility (Natural Resources Conservation Service building) in Sparta. Three forestry positions along with fire protection equipment are located at the Ranger Station in Tomah. The facilities are about 18 miles apart.

A new Ranger Station in Tomah is scheduled to be constructed this biennium.

We are in the first year of a five year lease at Sparta. The Department may be able to renegotiate the length of this lease thru Department of Administration. Currently, the Division's rental cost is over \$12,000 annually with a gradual increase to over \$13,000 by 2016. Also, additional storage space for the newly located Type 8 engine costs approximately \$300/month.

By comparing annual lease and storage costs at Sparta to the annualized construction cost of additional space, along with additional operational costs, it appears the Division will save approximately \$10,000/yr by relocating Sparta staff to the new Tomah Ranger station.

There is some concern about loss of convenience and 'one stop' shopping for customers from external partners with whom the Sparta Foresters are currently co-located with. The County Forest Administrator and internal partners (wardens) do not share these concerns.

Decision: The projected annual cost savings for the Division justifies consolidating facilities. The two Forester positions located in Sparta will be moved to the Tomah Ranger Station whenever the lease expires and the new facility is ready.

Price County:

Currently forestry has personnel in three locations in Price County: 1) the Park Falls Service Center (5 forestry employees and about 20 other DNR employees), 2) The Phillips Normal Building (County facility where we rent out one room for 2 forestry personnel as well as 1 warden), and 3) the Prentice Ranger Station which houses 2 forestry personnel.

The current Prentice Ranger Station replacement plan is to build a station that would be able to house 4 or more forestry personnel and equipment as well as a warden. The Department has already purchased a lot in Prentice in a location which is very well positioned for efficient response for fire suppression purposes due to proximity to two major highways. Prentice offers a key location for servicing forest landowners and for rapid fire response in southern Price County as well as portions of northern Taylor County. Historical fire data shows more fires occurring in southern Price County.

The Phillips office (county Normal building) is leased at nearly \$4,000 per year. This location has the advantage of allowing us to be co-located with our county partners. However, this office does not have storage facilities for DNR fire control vehicles. A significant investment would be needed to build storage for our fire equipment if we were to relocate to Phillips. Furthermore, the location of the Normal building is in a residential part of Phillips, several blocks from State Highway 13. This presents a safety hazard for the community and for DNR fire responders.

The Park Falls Service Center has adequate office and garage space for all northern Price County forestry needs. The Park Falls Area Dispatch center is well positioned and set up in the Park Falls Service Center. Staff from Park Falls services the northern portion of Price County as well as the southern portion of Ashland County.

Price County's forestry department has expressed a desire to maintain DNR forestry presence in the Phillips Normal Building at a low cost to the State. The department shares the county's interest in maintaining strong relations and concurs that co-location is desirable from a relationship standpoint. However, the department believes we can maintain effective relations, as we do in a number of other counties, even if we are not co-located.

Decision: For the reasons stated above, the Division intends to continue with plans to build a new Prentice Ranger Station on the purchased lot in Prentice. When it is completed forestry staff located in Phillips will be moved to the new Prentice Ranger Station. Warden staff will likely move to the new Prentice Ranger Station as well. The Division will maintain a presence and dispatch center at the Park Falls Service Center.

NEXT STEPS

The Division will initiate a process to work with partners to produce a business plan that will identify the specific outcomes the Division will produce to meet the intent of the Strategic Direction. Affected partners and customers will be invited to participate in parts or all of this effort. Examples include:

- Working with industry partners to help us to determine the areas of focus for our enhanced Forest Product Services (formerly Utilization & Marketing) program
- Identifying specific targets for implementing sustainable harvests on state forests and other state lands tied to annual allowable harvest levels identified in property master plans
- Working with our urban forestry partners to help us to describe how we will implement our new emphasis on canopy cover

We will also begin the process of aligning our resources in January. As a result, over the next few years we will be enhancing our ability to accomplish our mission – to protect and sustainably manage Wisconsin's magnificent forests.