

Forest Legacy Program

Thank you for considering the **Forest Legacy Program** for the protection of your forested lands.

The **Forest Legacy Program** was created to identify and protect environmentally important private forestlands threatened with conversion to non-forest use. This federally funded program allows states to acquire forestland through a fee simple purchase or conservation easement to keep forests as forests.

The Goal of the Forest Legacy Program in Wisconsin:

To minimize fragmentation and conversion of significant forested areas to non-forest uses through the wise administration of conservation easements that focus on the sustainable use of forest resources. The implementation of this goal emphasizes acquiring easements on large blocks of forest land open to public recreation, as described in the Division of Forestry Strategic Direction.

What is a conservation easement?

A conservation easement is a legally enforceable land preservation agreement between a landowner and a governmental agency or land trust for the purposes of conservation. The primary purpose of a conservation easement is to protect the land from certain forms of development or use. Protection is achieved by separating the right to subdivide and build on the land from the other rights of ownership. The landowner who gives up these development rights continues to privately own and manage the land.

Wisconsin uses conservation easements to attain a “bundle of rights.” At a minimum, the Forest Legacy Program requires the state to purchase the property’s development rights, but the state is also interested in both non-motorized and motorized public access rights. The landowner is then paid for the loss in value due to the restrictions. In this sale the landowner keeps the title to the land, which can then be sold, transferred or held. The deed restrictions are in perpetuity and are binding upon all subsequent owners.

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Application Process

When projects applications are submitted, the state's Forest Stewardship Committee ranks each project based on a number of criteria. The top Forest Legacy projects from each state then compete at the national level for a limited amount of program funding.

There are many factors in the selection and ranking for funding. The quality of the forest resources of the parcel can have a significant impact on funding the project. In addition to forest management, the evaluation process considers the quality of fish and wildlife habitat, presence of threatened and endangered species, the significance of cultural, historic, or scenic resources, and whether or not conservation of the parcel contributes to the protection of public drinking water supply. The level of threat to these resources and to overall conversion of the property is also considered. Each of these values is a reflection of the parcel and there is little if anything that a landowner can do to improve the attractiveness of the project based on these criteria.

Other factors are within the property owner's control, such as public access. Taxpayers sometimes question the use of public dollars to purchase easements if public access is not allowed. The selection of a potential project could hinge on whether or not the public will be granted access. It is important to note that the degree of public access is negotiable. Non-motorized public access is required at a minimum – this is a requirement of the state in order to obtain funding from Wisconsin's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund as the 25% cost share that the Forest Legacy Program requires. Adequate motorized access to the interiors of large blocks either by public or private roads is strongly recommended as well, although the implementation of motorized access is negotiable.

Also considered in the evaluation of a proposed project is the level of support for the protection of the parcel. The willingness of supporters to submit letters of support; commit funds; or pay for the appraisal, survey, monitoring or management plan may enhance project viability.

Each of these criteria is considered and it is up to the applicant to provide thorough information. It is important that you talk with local conservation groups and government agencies early in the application process.

A multi-resource management plan is required for all lands enrolled in the Forest Legacy Program. If you do not currently have a plan for your property, one will be prepared with the assistance of the DNR prior to closing.

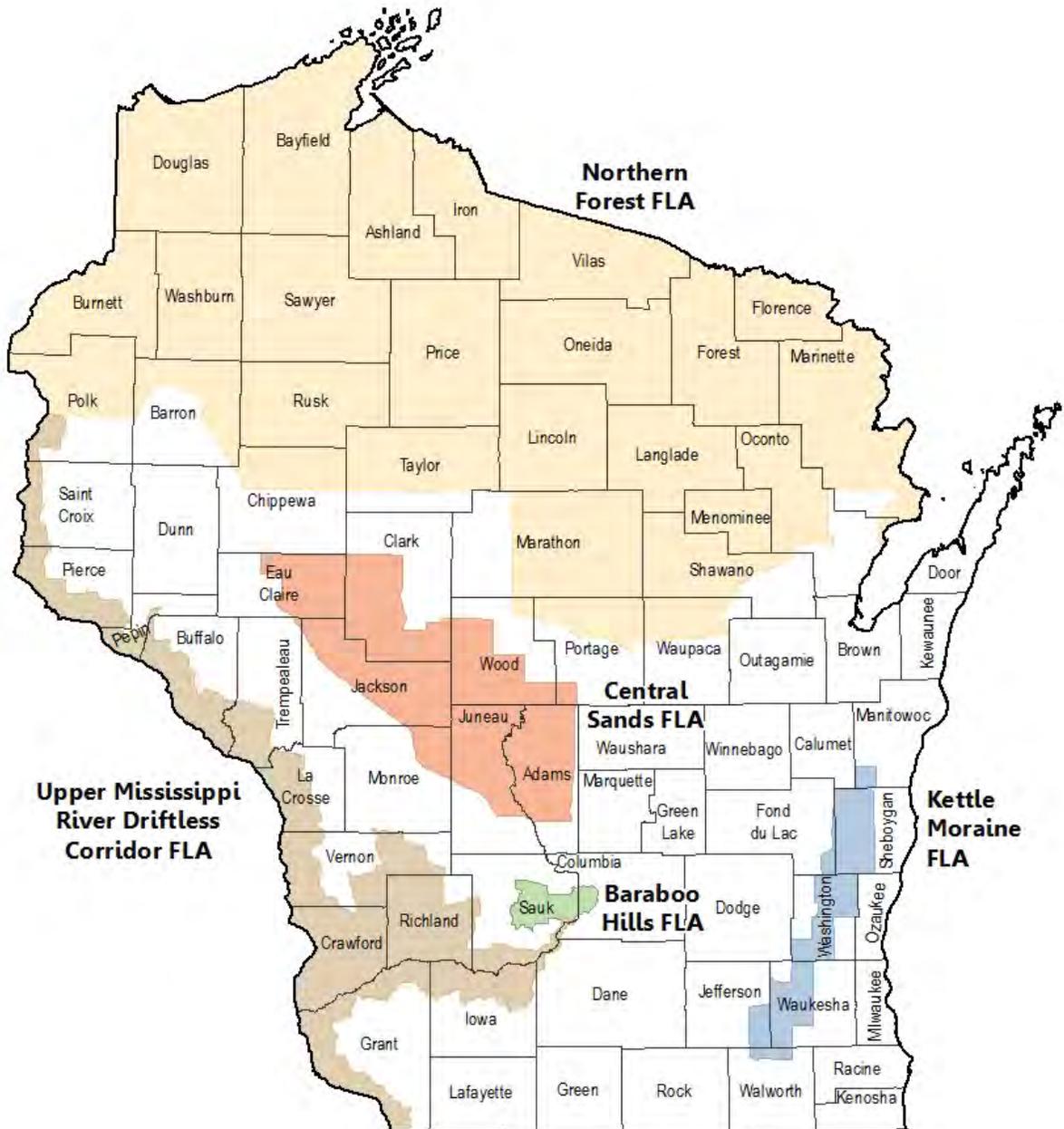
The value of an easement is a common landowner concern. The landowner is always informed of the fair market value of the "bundle of rights" that is being purchased. The value is determined by a real estate appraisal that meets federal appraisal standards. Landowners willing to donate a portion of the value may be eligible for certain income tax deductions. This may improve the chances of the project being selected for funding. All transactions are based on the concept of "willing seller, willing buyer." There is never condemnation of land.

For more information on Wisconsin's Forest Legacy Program, eligible project lands, and successfully funded Forest Legacy projects, visit: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestPlanning/legacy.html> or the USDA Forest Service website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml>.

Wisconsin's Forest Legacy Areas

To be eligible for the Forest Legacy Program, land must be located within one of Wisconsin's designated Forest Legacy Areas as identified in the Forest Legacy Program guiding strategy.

If you are unsure if your property is within one of the designated Forest Legacy Areas, go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestPlanning/legacyareas.html> to see area boundaries in each county. You can also contact your local DNR Forester or the Forest Legacy Coordinator at 608-266-9805.



Wisconsin Forest Legacy Application

Project Information

Project Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Forest Legacy Area (see map on previous page): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Project Location: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Project Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Forested Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Agricultural Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Open Field Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Open Water Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Are you willing to accept partial funding? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Can this project be phased? This means a project's total funding could be split among multiple funding cycles. [Click here to enter text.](#)

Landowner Contact Information

If the project contains multiple tracts with multiple landowners, each landowner must complete an application for the tracts they wish to be considered for the Forest Legacy Program.

Landowner's Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Mailing Address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Daytime Telephone Number: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Contact Person: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Mailing Address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Daytime Telephone Number: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Email Address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

List any additional owners: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Tract Information

Wisconsin Forest Legacy Application

Location/Address of Tract: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Tract Legal Description: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Tract Deed Reference (book and page number): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Tract is currently zone as: (residential, commercial, industrial): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Tract Acreage:

Forested Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Agricultural Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Open Field Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Open Water Acreage: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Wisconsin Forest Legacy Application

To ensure the Forest Stewardship Committee has enough information to properly evaluate the project, please answer each of these questions thoroughly. You may wish to enlist the help of your local DNR forester or other natural resource professional; land trusts; or local, state and regional conservation groups familiar with the area and your property to ensure accurate and detailed answers are provided.

When top state projects compete for Forest Legacy Program funding, a national review panel ranks each project based on four categories: importance of the property's resources, threat of conversion, strategic location of the parcel, and readiness of the project. Wisconsin has modeled our application questions and the Forest Stewardship Committee's scoring criteria after these categories to ensure we are putting forward highly competitive projects. While this application does reflect national project standards, it is used only for the state's review of projects. For submission at the national level, the application will need to be revised.

Importance of Your Property

Give us an understanding of your property, its characteristics, and uses.

Provide a general overview of the property's environmental, social and economic public benefits that would be gained through the protection and management of your property. (Examples to include: public recreation, riparian buffers, wetlands, important habitats, rare plant and animal communities, cultural and historic resources, and the protection of water quality).

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Describe the property: For each category some examples of possible information are referenced. However, please do not limit yourself to the specified examples. Feel free to expand on each topic and provide as much information to help the Forest Stewardship Committee get an understanding of the resources contained on your property. Please provide your answers for each question on separate paper.

Forest Management: (Forest resources, forest management activities, MFL enrollment, SFI or FSC forest certification)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Threatened or Endangered Species and Habitats: (Resources: Natural Heritage Inventory, DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/endangeredresources/>)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Fish, Wildlife, Plants and Unique Forest Communities: (types of habitat, common wildlife, potential of property to act as an environmental corridor, proximity to public and protected lands, size of connecting forests landscape)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Wisconsin Forest Legacy Application

Water Supply Protection: (property's water resources, ability of property to affect public drinking water supply and aquifer recharge areas. Resources: County Land and Water Conservation Department, Natural Resource Conservation Service, WDNR Bureau of Drinking water and Groundwater: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/groundwater/>, WDNR Bureau of Watershed Management: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/watersheds/>)

Click here to enter text.

Public Access: (current public access on property, potential future public access and allowable activities, public access and amount of use on adjacent properties)

Click here to enter text.

Scenic: (scenic qualities of property, presence of a formally designated scenic trail, river or highway, scenic vistas and important aesthetic viewpoints)

Click here to enter text.

Historical/Cultural (Historic logging camps, Wisconsin Conservation Corps camps, cemeteries, burial sites)

Click here to enter text.

Threat of Conversion

Please describe any pressure on your property and adjacent properties to convert to non-forest uses, such as development, agriculture, and non-sustainable forestry threats. How imminent are these threats? (Examples: adjacent or nearby housing developments, current zoning, new roads or utility corridors, large parcel subdivisions, local population growth and housing trends, landowner circumstances and adjacent land use changes)

Click here to enter text.

Strategic Location of the Parcel

Describe how this project fits within larger conservation plans, strategies, or initiatives as designated by a governmental or non-governmental entity. Please cite references.

Click here to enter text.

Wisconsin Forest Legacy Application

Describe how this project enhances previous conservation investments and enhances the overall health of Wisconsin's forests and natural resources.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Readiness of the Project

How ready is this property for Forest Legacy?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Who supports this project (local and state governments, conservation organizations, etc.)? Please attach a letter of support from each supporting party. (Note: If a project is selected to move on to the national funding process, support letters can be obtained after the June deadline.)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

While not required for applying to the Program, have any acquisition activities been previously completed (appraisal, surveys, title work, signed options, terms of the easement negotiated)?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Additional Tract Information

The Forest Legacy Program requires landowners to follow a multi-resource stewardship plan, including forest management activities. Are you willing to follow a plan for conducting resource management activities?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Are there any temporary or permanent improvements such as houses, barns, dams, antennas, all-season roads, bridges, etc., on the property? If yes, please identify and locate on a map.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Are there any active mining operations on the property, including active gravel pits? Are the mineral rights severed?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Wisconsin Forest Legacy Application

Forest Legacy easements are permanent and binding on future landowners. Why are you interested in obtaining a Forest Legacy easement on this property?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Provide any additional comments and information you would like to be considered in the evaluation of your application.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Financial Information

The following estimates are for preliminary use only. Any final offer negotiated for the purchase of a conservation easement will be based on an appraisal meeting federal standards and fair market value.

State the value of any landowner contribution either in donated value or in-kind services.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

List any and all liens and encumbrances of the proposed property, including contracts (includes timber contracts) or leases of outstanding rights that are not of record.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Is there a third party interested in participating in the acquisition, or providing an endowment for monitoring the conservation easement? If yes, attach a letter from that party describing their level of commitment. The commitment can range from such pre-acquisition work as paying for the title search or appraisal, providing funds for the acquisition, or providing funds to assist the state with monitoring compliance with the terms defined in the conservation easement. (Note: the State has final say on third party participation. If you anticipate third-party involvement in the acquisition, contact the state Forest Legacy Coordinator.)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Wisconsin Forest Legacy Application

Agreement Page

I/We, as landowner(s), agree to allow inspection, appraisal, and survey of my/our property being offered for consideration under the Forest Legacy Program. I/We agree to allow members of the Wisconsin DNR or the Wisconsin State Stewardship Coordinating Committee and their designated staff, to inspect the property, as may be required, any time. I/We shall be notified in advance of all inspection visits.

I/We understand that the Forest Legacy Program is based on a willing seller/willing buyer policy. I/We understand that, should the negotiations not result in an amicable sale, there will not be condemnation of my land.

I/We understand that the information provided herein becomes the property of the State of Wisconsin and will not be returned.

I/We understand and agree that information contained herein may be used, in part or in whole, to provide interested parties with details and specifics of the proposed project. Every effort shall be made to keep the project and its details as anonymous as possible, given the information requests received.

The information in this application is true to the best of my/our knowledge and belief. I/We certify and attest that all owners of the rights identified in this proposal for acquisition are aware of this application and approve its submission.

Signature of Landowner

Date

Signature of Landowner

Date

Signature of Landowner

Date

Wisconsin Forest Legacy Application

Application Checklist

With your Forest Legacy Program application packet, please submit **two copies** of the application (one original and one copy) and the following:

- Completed application (please submit two copies of the application – one original and one copy)
- Signed Agreement Page
- Copy of deed, including legal description (proof of ownership)
- Property maps

At a minimum, please include a map indicating the boundaries of the proposed Forest Legacy property, and any portions being excluded from the project, with approximate acreage. Maps are one of the best tools to help the Forest Stewardship Committee visualize your property. Maps that show greater property detail, such as water resources; forest landscape; roads and improvements; and proximity to other protected public and private open space are encouraged.

- List of any known encumbrances or liens existing on the property.

Optional Attachments

- Aerial maps or photographs of the property
- Landowner letter of intent – addressed to the Forest Stewardship Committee, explaining your intent to apply for Forest Legacy funding; the readiness of the project; and any additional information you believe the Committee should be aware of when ranking your project.
- Copy of a Forest Management Plan, if available
- Copy of a current appraisal, if available
- Copy of a recent tax bill
- Letters of support for the project, including commitment of funds, if applicable, from:
 - Local land trust
 - Town officials (planning and zoning board, mayor, town council, etc.)
 - State and regional conservation group or governmental agency
 - Local and state representatives
 - Congressional representatives

Application due date: June 16, 2014

Submit applications to:

Forest Legacy Coordinator
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry
101 S. Webster St., PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707

Applications may be submitted electronically to amy.singh@wisconsin.gov. If you submit your application electronically, you must still send a hard copy to the DNR address above.

Please note all submitted materials become the property of the State of Wisconsin and are non-returnable. Disclosure of this information is voluntary. However, failure to provide all of the requested information will substantially decrease the ability of the Forest Stewardship Committee to properly review and rank your application and property for participation in Wisconsin's Forest Legacy Program.