Forestry Headquarters Relocation Proposal

DRAFT Report

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Purpose

The 2015-2017 Wisconsin state budget (2015 WI Act 55, Section 9132, page 642) directed the Department of Natural Resources to develop a proposal to move the headquarters of the Division of Forestry (FR HQ) to a northern location. This proposal is being submitted with the department's 2017-19 biennial budget requests. As directed by Act 55, the final proposal will provide details on the costs of relocating the headquarters, a timeline for implementing a relocation, and preferred locations for a northern headquarters. As part of the analysis, the department assessed a range of northern options for the location of the FR HQ and the positions that would be included in the FR HQ relocation. The department will be working with the Department of Administration (DOA) to assess the cost implications of each of the options. For the purposes of this proposal, the department considered any interested municipality north of U.S. Highway 10.

Terminology used in this report

Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

DNR Headquarters (DNR HQ) – located in the State Natural Resources Building (previously called GEF 2) in Madison. The DNR HQ houses the leadership and program management for all of the divisions in the DNR.

Division of Forestry (FR)

Forestry Headquarters (FR HQ) – The current FR HQ is located in the DNR HQ.

Department of Administration (DOA)

Full time equivalent (FTE) – unit to describe the workload of a position

Role of Forestry headquarters

The role of the Forestry headquarters is to:

- Develop policy and coordinate implementation of forestry programs across the state
- Manage and coordinate statewide forest fire program, including command center operations
- Work in partnership with other divisions to develop statewide coordination of programs
- Participate in decision making on department management and operations teams (e.g., Department Leadership Team and Operations Management Team)
- Respond to and support state initiatives and partnerships with other government functions (e.g., Governor's office, Legislature, other state agencies)
- Work with partners and stakeholders to develop and guide implementation of forestry programs across the state

The department believes that the following principles are critical to a successful headquarters, no matter its location. The department used these to guide the analysis and development of the report on relocating the headquarters to a northern location.

A successful FR HQ will:

- Facilitate effective and efficient management and leadership of the division.
- Maintain the ability to foster "One DNR" though effective collaboration with other parts of the agency.
- Sustain and promote strong partnerships with current and future stakeholders throughout the state.
- Support staff in accomplishing their work.
- Be efficient and effective in working with customers and partners.
- Make best use of limited fiscal and human resources.

Background and Current Status

Distribution & Responsibilities of Forestry Staff

The Division of Forestry currently has 454 full time equivalent (FTE) positons located around the state. There are 56.5 FTE division positons located with the other department programs in the DNR HQ building in Madison. These positions have statewide responsibilities. There are an additional 33.5 FTE division positons with statewide responsibility located outside of the headquarters. Generally, we consider the positions with statewide responsibilities to be part of the FR HQ. The division has 364 FTE positions located throughout the state due to their geographic (a subset of the state such as county or region) responsibilities. Table 1 shows the current distribution of division FTE by DNR's forestry districts. Figure 1 shows the location of division FTE positions by county.

Table 1: Current distribution of DNR Forestry FTEs by District

Location	Forestry FTE with Statewide Responsibility	Forestry FTE with Geographic Responsibility	Forestry FTE by District
Headquarters (Madison)	56.5		**56.5**
Southern District	7	65	**72**
West Central District	3.5	87	**90.5**
Northwest District	2	103	**105**
Northeast District	21	109	**130**
Total	**90**	**364**	**454**

As the division fills vacant positions, it is standard practice to evaluate where positions are located based on responsibilities and the need to work with internal and/or external partners. Often a position will be advertised for multiple location options based on responsibilities and attracting a wide pool of qualified candidates.

Figure 1: Current Distribution of Division of Forestry FTEs by County.
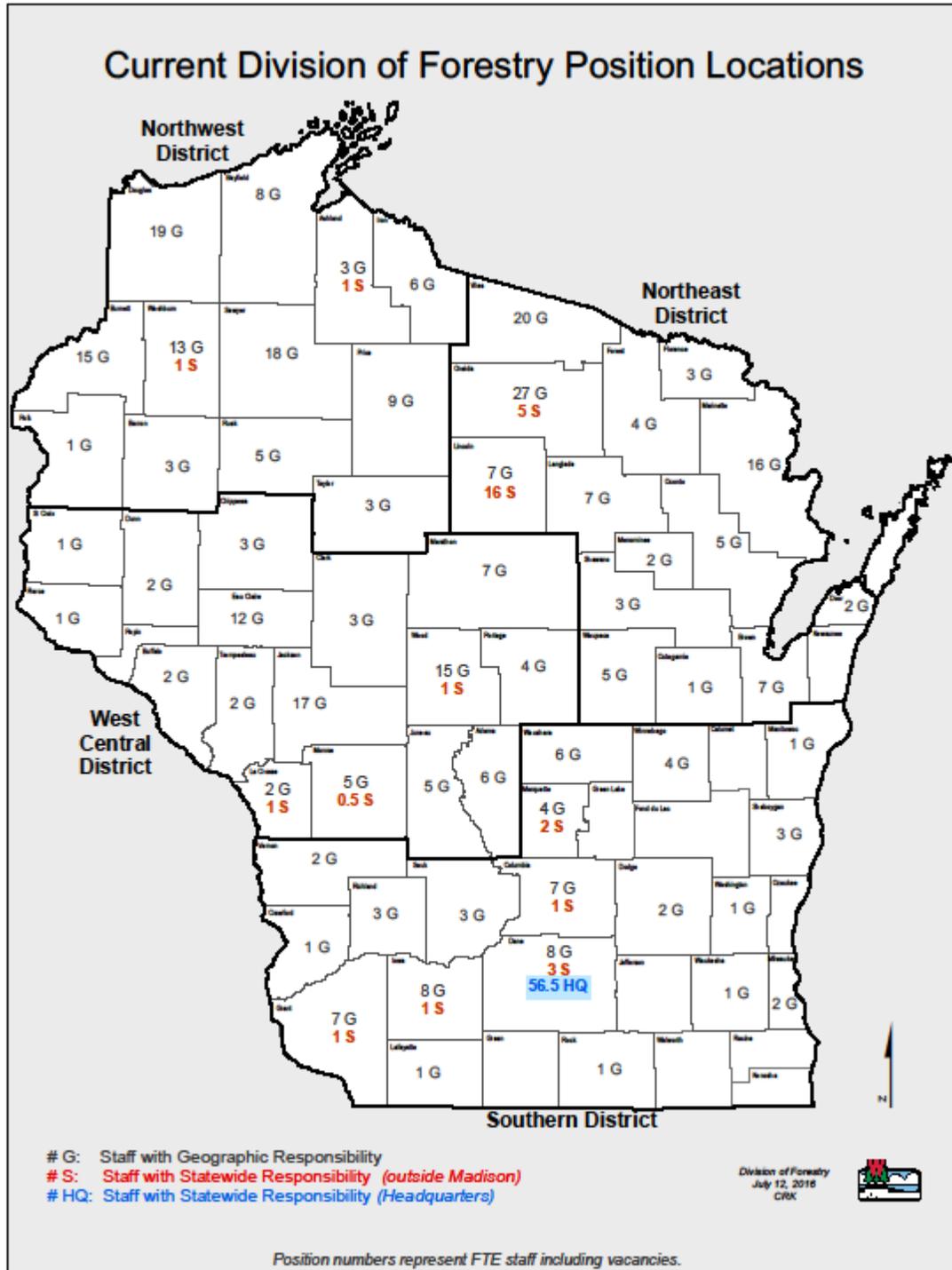
Forestry Headquarters Programs (Bureaus)

The Division of Forestry headquarters houses four broad program areas: Administration, Forest Management, Forest Protection, and Forest Business Services. Employees in each of the three bureaus, as well as those assigned to the Division Administrator, are stationed at the headquarters office and in other locations around the state. Below is a general description of the functions and responsibilities for each of the headquarters' programs.

Headquarters staff work closely with other divisions and programs within the DNR HQ as part of the agency's "One DNR" approach to efficiently and effectively achieving the department's mission. Having a department headquarters that encompasses all divisions is the typical arrangement across state government agencies.

Forestry Administration is responsible for the overall direction and leadership of the Forestry Division as well as communicating with internal and external decision makers about the Forestry mission. The administration consists of the Division Administrator (Chief State Forester), the Deputy Administrator and 3 staff FTEs. Forestry Administration also includes 3 bureau directors stationed at headquarters and 4 district forestry leaders with geographic responsibility stationed within their districts all under the supervision of the Deputy Administrator.

The Forest Management Bureau consists of two sections and provides guidance and expertise on issues related to public and private forest management statewide. The Public & Private Forestry Section includes coordination of state and county forests, forest certification, as well as the Private Forestry Team and the Urban Forestry Team. The Forest Sciences Section includes division expertise in silviculture, economics, hydrology, ecology, socio-economic analysis, reforestation, and forest health. The majority of staff in the Reforestation Program and the Forest Health Team are stationed outside of the headquarters office.

The Forest Protection Bureau provides statewide direction for the forestry fire and law enforcement functions. The Forest Protection bureau includes the Aeronautics Team, the Forest Fire & Law Enforcement Section, and the Equipment Research & Development Team. The majority of staff in the Forest Protection Bureau are stationed at the LeMay Center in Tomahawk or at other locations around the state.

The Forestry Business Services Bureau is responsible for many of the internal processes necessary to effectively implement division programs, as well as serving external customer needs. The bureau includes the forestry budget management team as well as two sections. The Technology Services Section includes GIS functions, web and Information Technology development, and technology support. The Staff and Partner Services Section includes hiring and training coordination, education and outreach, partnership coordination, and forestry planning services, as well as the Forest Products Services Team, which supports forest industries throughout the state.

The vast majority of "field" staff, those with a specific geographic assignment (e.g., foresters and forestry technicians), are supervised by the applicable District Forestry Leader (DFL). DFLs are located

across the state in their geographic area of responsibility, and will remain in their current locations to oversee the implementation of forestry programs. There are no DFLs located at DNR headquarters. (See Figure 1 for location of staff with geographic responsibilities.)

Relocation Options

Potential FR HQ locations were identified through a Request for Information (RFI) process in which municipalities expressed interest in hosting the FR HQ. All locations expressing interest in the FR HQ through the RFI process as well as communities that shared their interest prior to the RFI were considered.

Table 2: Communities expressing interest in the FR HQ

Communities expressing interest in the FR HQ		
Antigo	Iron County	Phelps
Ashland	Kronenwetter	Phillips
Barron	Ladysmith	Portage County
Bayfield County	Lena	Prentice
Boulder Junction	Mason	Rhinelander
Bruce	Mellen	Rib Lake
Burnett County	Merrill	Rib Mountain
Crandon	Minocqua	Rice Lake
Cumberland	Neillsville	Rothschild
Dunbar	New Auburn	Schofield
Eau Claire	New Richmond	Spooner
Florence County	Oneida County	Tomahawk
Forest County	Owen	Wausau
Gresham	Park Falls	Weston
Hayward		

After assessing the array of interested communities, the department has selected as preferred location options (in alphabetical order): Hayward, Rhinelander, and Wausau.

In order to select preferred locations for a northern headquarters, the department evaluated submissions from interested municipalities, sought input from the Council on Forestry on important aspects of a location, and considered attributes that would support the needs of a Forestry headquarters separated from the department headquarters. Aspects that were found to be important to a Forestry headquarters include, but are not limited to, proximity to external customers including forestry professionals and forestry related organizations; proximity to department decision makers; access to other agency decision makers (federal and state); access to the legislature and other external decision makers; opportunities to interact and share resources with other DNR programs and staff; centrally located for cost effective travel by staff; accessibility to customers, and; availability of an adequate communication/technology infrastructure and established systems (e.g., bandwidth).

Positions and work functions associated with the FR HQ deal with policy and decision making for forestry programs at a statewide level. These positions work closely with program managers across all divisions, have multiple partners, customers, and stakeholders across the state, and are involved with both rural and urban forests and communities. The majority are not associated with a specific geographic area of the state. Because of these broad responsibilities, it is most efficient and effective if they are located where they can access a variety of locations, including frequent travel to Madison.

Hayward, Rhinelander, and Wausau were selected because they are communities that are home to a variety of forestry professionals, organizations, other agencies and colleagues that FR HQ staff currently work with. The DNR has offices in all three locations which would provide some opportunity for divisions to work together and share resources. The Chequamegon–Nicolet National Forest (CNNF) Headquarters and USFS Northern Research Station are located in Rhinelander as well as Lumberjack RC&D, a USDA NRCS office, Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association, Wisconsin County Forest Association, and several forest products and related companies. Locations that provided easy access and shortest distances to other staff and partners were preferred. Wausau would provide the best location for FR HQ staff to access all areas of the state in roughly the same amount of time and would be the most cost effective location for the frequent travel that will be needed to Madison and the DNR HQ. Wausau is located close to partners at other state agencies, forest products companies, and a USDA NRCS office, and is close to UW-Stevens Point which has the nation's largest natural resources school. Hayward is home to several forest products companies, is in close proximity to the CNNF and has a DNR forestry property with available space (state nursery). All three locations are in counties with designated County Forests and have active programs for private land management. More thorough evaluation of communication infrastructure at the three locations will be undertaken to ensure sufficient capacity. The size and amenities of these three communities, when compared to a number of the other communities that expressed interest, would also provide a breadth of opportunities that are attractive to current and future employees.

Forestry headquarter positions

The division analyzed where positions with statewide responsibilities would most appropriately be located if the headquarters were relocated to a northern community. A number of positions have been identified as most appropriately being location in the FR HQ. Other positions' "best fit" would be to remain in the DNR HQ given the work they do, while a set of additional positons could be located either in the DNR HQ or a northern FR HQ. Another group of employees are tied to a specific location outside either HQ. Table 3 shows the preferred location of positions with statewide responsibilities if a FR HQ is created in a northern location.

The positions listed for the FR HQ (northern location) are critical to division decision making and should be close to the other forestry decision makers. They have primary and direct impact on division-wide policy making. The positions listed for the DNR HQ have key internal customers and partners that are in the DNR HQ and have regular interactions (often face to face needed) with those partners. Also, some of

these positions have special technological requirements associated with them and require the infrastructure provided in DNR HQ/Madison. The positions that are listed under the "multiple location option" have both regular interaction with both DNR HQ staff and staff listed under FR HQ. Their key external customers are statewide and in a variety of locations depending on the position. The functions of many of these positions can be performed in a variety of locations. For some positions, it is beneficial to be closer to external customer groups, other field staff, or other internal partners that are distributed throughout the state. The list of positions under the "other" section are those that must be located at a facility they manage (e.g., nursery) or are located with a key partner (e.g., Forest Products Lab).

Table 3: Preferred location for Forestry positions with statewide responsibilities if a northern FR HQ is created.

FR HQ (northern location)		
• Division Administrator	• Staff and Partner Services Section Chief	• Public and Private Forestry Section Chief
• Deputy Administrator	• Forest Products Services Team Leader	• Sciences Section Chief
• Forestry Business Services Bureau Director	• Forest Fire and Law Enforcement Section Chief	• Silviculturist/ Ecologist
• Forest Management Bureau Director	• Forest Fire Operations Specialist	• County & Public Forest Specialist
• Forest Protection Bureau Director	• Organization Development Consultant	• Executive Staff Assistant
• Policy Advisor		

DNR HQ (GEF 2)		
• Radio Communications Specialist	• GIS Program Manager	• Internet Manager/E-Business Liaison
• Aeronautics Team Leader	• Forestry IT Project Manager	• Technology Services Section Chief
• Forest Conservation Easement Specialist	• Forestry GIS Developer	• GIS Specialist
• Web Developer	• IT Coordinator	• IT Development Program Manager

Multiple location options (FR HQ – northern, DNR HQ, other)		
• Forest Economist	• Private Forestry Team Leader	• Hiring and Training Coordinator
• State Forests Coordinator	• Private Forestry & Easement Monitoring Specialist	• Forestry Planner
• Certification Coordinator	• Private Forestry Specialist	• Budget and Grants Specialist (2)
• Forest Socio-Economic Analyst	• Forest Tax Operations Specialist	• Budget Manager

- Forest Management and Ecology Analyst
- Silviculturist/ Ecologist (2)

- Forest Hydrologist

- Forest Geneticist

- Fire Department Liaison
- Fire Suppression Specialist

- Forestry Law Enforcement Specialist (2)
- Forest Fire Prevention Specialist
- Wildland Urban Interface Specialist

- Forest Tax Enforcement & Operations
- Forest Tax Law Specialist

- Forest Tax Law Administration Specialist (2)
- Forest Tax Field Manager

- Forest Tax Field Specialist
- Forest Health Team Leader

- Gypsy Moth & Invasive Forest Pest Coordinator
- Invasive Plant Coordinator

- Rural and Urban Forest Inventory Analyst
- Resource Management Partnership Coordinator
- Learning Manager

- Education and Outreach Specialist
- Urban Forestry Team Leader
- Urban Forestry Financing Specialist
- Urban Forestry Partnership Specialist
- Forestry Field IT/GIS Support Coordinator

Other (assigned to specific facility or partner)

- Reforestation Team Leader/Nursery Superintendent
- Regeneration Specialist

- Forest Health Pathologist

- Forest Products Services Statewide Specialist

Costs

The department will work with DOA to determine costs of building and leasing office space. The final proposal that is submitted will contain a complete analysis that includes moving costs and expenses.

Additional Cost Considerations

As part of the final proposal, we will analyze and include additional costs associated with a potential FR HQ move.

- Communication and IT infrastructure needs of the FR HQ
- Availability of communication and IT infrastructure in preferred locations
- Limited space availability in current DNR facilities
- Continuing cost of current space in DNR HQ
- Duplication of Command Center resources
- Cost of staff travel

Implementation and Timeline

As part of the final proposal the department will provide an estimate of the timeframe for completing a Forestry HQ whether through lease, redevelopment or new construction. Depending on the options and conditions of a location, the actual move of the headquarters could take roughly one to several years.