

## Wisconsin's Forest Legacy Areas (FLAs)

The Forest Legacy Areas must meet the National Eligibility Criteria in order to qualify for participation in the Program. Wisconsin selected and defined the Forest Legacy Areas (FLAs) in the state by applying the national criteria, listed on page 2, and then refining them further to meet the state's requirements. The areas must meet the above mentioned definition of being an environmentally important forest, contain two or more of the environmental values detailed above, and be threatened by one or more of the above listed threats.

### *Additional Criteria for Selecting Forest Legacy Areas*

Meeting the national criteria was used as a starting point for selecting Wisconsin's Forest Legacy Areas. The FLP Sub-Committee chose to refine the selection even more in order to better target efforts and dollars where they would have the most positive impacts. Therefore, the FLP Sub-committee then imposed the following selection criteria to further refine and define the areas to be included in the Forest Legacy Areas.

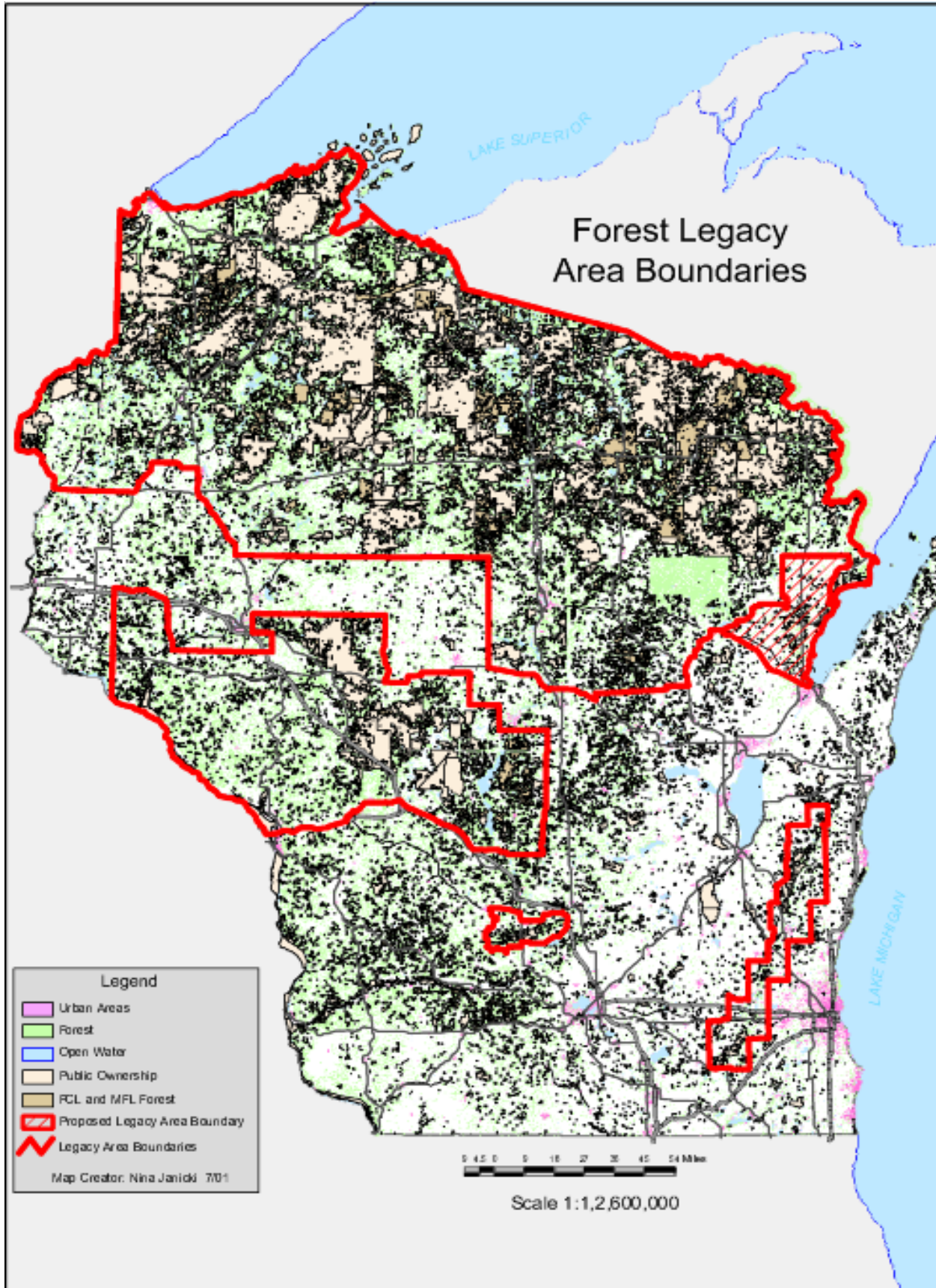
- Large blocks of forest land being defined as those that are regionally or nationally significant or able to support diverse populations of wide-ranging mammals, forest interior bird species, a diversity of communities and/ or a variety of forest habitats.
- Areas that meet the above criteria and are deemed threatened by conversion at a regional level.

Proposed areas were evaluated against all the above mentioned criteria with the more of the criteria that were met, the higher the importance of that area. After much discussion and public involvement, the following areas were selected as meeting the above criteria and should be considered as Forest Legacy Areas.

### *Summary of Issues*

Generally, Wisconsin's forests are healthier and more productive than they were 100 or even fifty years ago. However, the pressures to develop, fragment and parcelize continue to increase even as the demand for wood products increases and the appreciation of protecting intact systems grows. The best way to meet the present and future demands for the products and amenities that private forests provide is to maintain the forests in large enough blocks to make economic and biological sense.

In selecting areas, this assessment focused on the ecological values and opportunities for economic uses found in large contiguous forest blocks. These forests form the foundation of the timber industry and the ecological values listed earlier – product-producing forests, birds and other wildlife, fish, diversity, and clean water. They also needed to fit our description of environmentally important forests and be viewed as threatened according to our criteria listed in the earlier section. Map 1 shows the proposed Forest Legacy Areas for Wisconsin, while Maps 2, 5, and 6 show enlargements of the individual legacy areas. Such activities contribute to the fragmentation of Wisconsin's forests.



## *Overall Goals of the Forest Legacy Areas*

Within these areas the goal of the Forest Legacy Areas is to protect those values and attributes that led us to designate the area as environmentally important. Specifically, these goals include:

- Maintain the ability of the forest to produce forest products on a sustainable basis.
- Maintain other traditional and non-destructive uses, protect important fish and wildlife habitat.
- Protect existing cultural resources, protect or enhance rare or unique habitats and their associated species, protect watershed, increase the amounts of continuous forest by maintaining or creating large blocks of forest protected from fragmentation.
- Create public use opportunities where appropriate.
- Reduce forest fragmentation by retaining large blocks of forest or by connecting to existing protected lands.

## *Protection and Maintenance of Goals*

Protection and maintenance of these areas are central to the success of the program. Therefore, tracts be protected and maintained. In addition, the following standards will be applied when working in any of the FLAs.

- Acquisition of conservation easements is preferred to full-fee acquisition. However, in situations where a conservation easement is not appropriate or possible the Forest Stewardship Committee will consider recommending full-fee acquisition.
- Acquisition will be held by the State under the FLP State grant option.
- Acquire development rights on all tracts. This would include the rights to subdivide, construct buildings, control utility right-of-way locations, and development of permanent access roads.
- No disposal of waste or hazardous materials will be allowed.
- Restrict the development of mining, drilling of mineral, sand, and gravel pits to sole use by the property owner, and to locations, and sizes, where such mining or drilling would not damage or impair water quality or other protected resource values.
- Public access is preferred for most tracts, but will not be required, especially in cases where there are rare communities or species which could be damaged by public access. Where public is desirable, the FSP Committee will make applicants aware that landowners who will allow non-motorized public access will receive a higher ranking than landowners who restrict their land from public access.
- All tracts where either conservation easement or fee-purchase is used will have a comprehensive, multi-source management plan developed and used. These will be approved by the State Forester or her/his designee.
- The management plan will identify and address all property values of significance on the property and will be updated at least every ten-years.
- All plans will contain a monitoring plan which identifies the monitoring agency, parameters to be measured and frequency of monitoring.
- Any timber or forest products harvesting will be subject to a harvesting plan approved by the State Forester or his designee.
- Water quality best management practices (BMP's) will be applied to all practices initiated in the property.