



# MARATHON COUNTY FORESTRY/RECREATION COMMITTEE AGENDA

**Date and Time of Meeting:** Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 12:30pm

**Meeting Location:** Conference Room #3, 212 River Drive, Wausau WI 54403

MEMBERS: Arnold Schlei (Chairman), Rick Seefeldt (Vice-Chairman), Jim Bove

**Marathon County Mission Statement:** *Marathon County Government serves people by leading, coordinating, and providing county, regional, and statewide initiatives. It directly or in cooperation with other public and private partners provides services and creates opportunities that make Marathon County and the surrounding area a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business.*

**Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department Mission Statement:** *Adaptively manage our park and forest lands for natural resource sustainability while providing healthy recreational opportunities and unique experiences making Marathon County the preferred place to live, work, and play.*

## Agenda Items:

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment Period – Not to Exceed 15 Minutes
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Tuesday, November 5, 2019 Committee Meeting
4. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports
  - A. Wisconsin Counties Earn High Marks for Forest Management
  - B. Pixelle Specialty Solutions to Acquire Business from Verso
  - C. Final County Forest Fall 2019 Timber Bid Summary
5. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution:
  - A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee
    1. 2020 Forestry/Recreation Tentative Meeting Schedule
  - B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration
    1. Review and Consider Approving the 2020 County Forest Wildlife Work Plan – Brandon Stefanski, DNR Wildlife Biologist
    2. Review and Consider Approving the 2020 County Forest Work Plan – Resolution to Approve
    3. Resolution: Application for County Forest Acreage Payment
6. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination for Consideration by Environmental Resources Committee - None
7. Next Meeting Date, Time, Location: January 7, 2020, 12:30pm, Rm. 3, 212 River Dr., Wausau, WI 54403
  - A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence
  - B. Future Agenda Items: Review of Proposed Policy Revisions to the Marathon County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan Chapters 400-600, Request by IronBull to Use Nine Mile Trail System for Red Granite Grinder Gravel Bike Race, Timbersale Closeouts, Land Acquisitions
8. Adjournment

**SIGNED /s/ Thomas Lovlien  
PRESIDING OFFICER OR DESIGNEE**

ANY PERSON PLANNING TO ATTEND THIS MEETING WHO NEEDS SOME TYPE OF SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE SHOULD CALL THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE AT 261-1500 OR E-MAIL [INFOMARATHON@MAIL.CO.MARATHON.WI.US](mailto:INFOMARATHON@MAIL.CO.MARATHON.WI.US) ONE BUSINESS DAY BEFORE THE MEETING.

FAXED TO: 848-9361 848-5887 715-387-4175  
Daily Herald City Pages Marshfield News  
Mid-west Radio Group – 848-3158  
 FAXED BY: Jodi Luebbe  
 FAX DATE/TIME: November 26, 2019 9:30 a.m.

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m/p.m.

Members present: Arnold Schlei (c), James Bove

Excused: Rick Seefeldt

Also present: Tom Lovlien-Forest Administrator, Jamie Polley-Director, Chad Keranen-DNR Liaison

Call meeting to order – Meeting called to order by Chairman Schlei at 12:30pm, Rm 3, 212 River Dr., Wausau.

Public Comment Period – None

Approve Minutes – **Motion** / second by Schlei / Bove to approve the minutes from the October 1, 2019 regular Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

A. County Forest Land Acquisition Updates – CERES and Romatowski Properties – The DNR is reviewing the appraisals for both the CERES and Romatowski properties. Lovlien is hopeful that by the December meeting he will have both of the certified appraisals so that he can start negotiating with the landowners on the two properties.

B. Wausau 24 and NICA High School Race Participation and Revenue – Lovlien reported that the Wausau 24 Race had 458 mountain bike and 47 trail run participants. The NICA High School Mountain Bike Race had 212 campers and 706 racers. Revenues were around \$10,000. Both races were well run and staff expects them to return next year.

C. County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2021 – 2035 Survey Results – Lovlien said input on the plan was taken over a month long period and less than 10% responded to the surveys. Lovlien listed some themes. There is general support for sustainable forestry and replanting; support for keeping forests open to all multiple uses including hunting, hiking, and recreational opportunities; concerns over excessive development and that protections need to be in place to minimize environmental degradation; concerns over invasive species and how to manage them; expand recreational opportunities that allow for more mountain biking, winter fat biking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing; general support for snowmaking capabilities for skiing at Nine Mile which is under a feasibility study right now by the Nordic ski group; some suggested adding new trails others say no new trails; limiting additional motorized use of the forest; conserving and protecting forests for all species of wildlife; and balancing all uses on county forests. Some people want more and some people want less and staff's job is to develop a plan that protects the forest, compromises and balances all of the different uses while following the intent of the County Forest Law.

D. County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan Chapter 200 Section 215.2.3 Other Funds – Lovlien said Bove had raised a question under the section that says Committee will consider donations, endowments and other gifts whether real estate, equipment or cash and whether the County Corporation Counsel is the best person to be consulted to ascertain if such gifts benefit the County. The Corporation Counsel's Office is the appropriate office to ask whether or not something is a gift or endowment. Lovlien said it is boiler plate language. Bove thought it was redundant because as a Committee they have the option to ask Corporation Counsel's opinion on anything that they feel they need to. He felt there were other and better options and that they always have the right to retain Corporation Counsel's opinion if needed. **Motion** / second by Bove / Schlei to strike the sentence pertaining to Corporation Counsel. Motion **carried** by voice vote. Lovlien clarified that the entire plan requires DNR approval. If there is anything that they need included for legal purposes the DNR will let them know.

E. Wisconsin Forest Products Week – Lovlien explained that Wisconsin Forest Products Week is October 20-26. Wisconsin's forests are very important to Marathon County and the State with over 17 million acres, 24 billion in goods and employing over 60,000 citizens. It's the second leading employer in Marathon County next to agriculture.

F. National Forest Products Week – Ninety-six percent of the nation's industrial wood comes from domestic supplies. Wisconsin is number one in the nation for papermaking and has been for the past sixty years.

Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Review Timber Bids and Award Contracts – A second bid opening was held on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Lovlien said they have to advertise and open bids twice and then are allowed to sell the sales over the counter. A total of four bids were received with one bid on tract 6-19, one bid on tract 9-19, and two bids on tract 8-19. The high bids received on tracts 6-19 and 8-19 were above the advertised values. Lovlien recommends awarding those contracts to the high bidders. Lovlien explained that the bid on tract 9-19 was below the advertised value and the County is allowed to sell the sale if it's above that value. There had been a case in the past where bids were not over the advertised value and because of the amount of bidding and the markets at that time staff made a case to sell sales. Lovlien stated with the amount of bids, winter only work, poor markets, and the amount of staff time it takes to set up the sales his recommendation is to award the sale. **Motion** / second by Schlei / Bove to award tract's 6-19 and 8-19 to the high bidders. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent. **Motion** / second by Bove / Schlei to award tract 9-19 to the high bidder. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

2. County Forest Land Acquisition – Committee Discussion on Priorities for Blocking – Lovlien said a question arose at the last meeting on how priorities are determined for land acquisition and if farm land could be purchased and reforested. Lovlien said the first priority for acquisition is anything that blocks in the existing County forest along with if there is timber of value that could be harvested. The acquisition maps are currently in the County Forest Plan. The plan can be amended at any time with County Board and DNR approval. Lovlien said planting different species would involve the soil type and determining what species would grow on the site. Keranen discussed the costs involved to plant trees and some of the challenges they have had in planting on farm land in the northeastern part of the County. Bove was interested in this because the western part of the County doesn't have many County owned recreational forest lands and he would like to see more but understands there were challenges. Lovlien said with some of the farms closing it may be an opportunity to get some forested land along with farm land. They can look at properties as they come up for sale.

B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration - None

Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – December 3, 2019 at 12:30pm, 212 River Dr., Rm. 3

A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence – none

B. Future Agenda Items – 2020 County Forest Work Plan, 2020 County Forest Wildlife Work Plan, Resolution: Application for County Forest Acreage Share Payment, 2020 Forestry/Recreation Committee Tentative Meeting Schedule.

Adjourn – **Motion** / second by Bove / Schlei to adjourn at 1:15 pm. **Motion carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

## Northern Wisconsin counties earn high marks for forest management

Auditors find nothing to correct or improve upon as 4 counties face recertification of forest products

Written By: [Shelley Nelson](#) | Nov 5th 2019 - 4am.



Douglas was among four counties in northern Wisconsin audited for certification through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forest Stewardship Council this summer. Both third-party certification programs came up with no findings that needed correction. (Jed Carlson / [jcarlson@superiortelegram.com](mailto:jcarlson@superiortelegram.com))

Douglas County's forest management practices raised no concerns among auditors reviewing policy and practice for sustainability.

Douglas was among four counties in northern Wisconsin audited for certification through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forest Stewardship Council this summer. Both third-party certification programs came up with no findings that needed correction in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield and Barron counties.

"It's the first time I've ever heard of it," said Mark Heyde, forest certification specialist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. "It's super uncommon."

Heyde said it was a particularly good achievement because the lack of findings occurred during the five-year certification process. He said audits occur annually with surveillance audits during the four years between recertification. Surveillance audits only review a portion of the standards, he said.

"It's not unusual for a surveillance audit, but it is almost unheard of in a full-blown certification audit, said Doug Brown, county and public forest specialist with the Wisconsin DNR.

This year, the audit reviewed the full standard for both recertification programs.

"Those are hundreds of indicators that the team has to come in and find conformance," Heyde said.

The Wisconsin DNR holds the third-party forest certification programs for forest land own by the state and county forests, which collectively makes up the largest public landholding in the state. The DNR holds the certification for 27 participating counties of the 29 with county forest land.

The state started pursuing third-party certification of its forests in the early 2000s in response to Time Warner seeking certified paper for its magazines, Heyde said. He said at the time, the company purchased 500,000 tons of paper annually from Wisconsin.

"It made sense for the state to hold those certifications because the DNR owns about 1½ million acres of land, and the counties and state have a relationship through the County Forest Law," Heyde said. Seeking certification at the state level made more sense than each county pursuing their own certification, he said.

Certification is voluntary and individual counties are free to choose one, both or neither of the certification programs.

“Sustainable forest management reaches way beyond harvesting,” said Jon Harris, Douglas County director of forestry and natural resources. “It includes responsible forestry practices that promote clean water, clean air, carbon storage, biodiversity and wildlife habitat conservation, all while providing jobs, improving our quality of life, and providing products we use every day from the books we read to the table where we sit with family and much, much more.”

Douglas County made the decision in 2005 to seek certification through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative at the request of some of its bigger buyers, Harris said. In 2008, dual certification was added when the county joined the Forest Stewardship Council program, he said.

“We committed ourselves to the standards they developed ... for sustainable harvesting,” Harris said.

This year, Douglas County was audited for the entire standard of both certification programs in August, Harris said. He said about 30 people participated in the week-long audit.

Harris said the audit started with a kickoff meeting where the county explained policies and procedures for managing its forest., then the day was spent in the field visiting 13 randomly selected timber sale sites that have been established, sold or harvested in the last five years, he said. Following the time in the field, auditors talked amongst themselves then explained what they liked and any concerns they had.

After four days of touring the county forests in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas and Barron, the auditors met one last time and discussed the four counties and their management practices, Harris said.

“They basically both, SFI and FSC, said there were no findings,” Harris said. “Basically, they call their finding a minor or major corrective action, an opportunity for improvement or an observation. There is zero, zero opportunities for improvement or corrective action or concerns identified by either group ... that all the counties are an exemplary forest management program.”

If there had been any findings, the corrective actions recommended, they would have applied to all county and state forests.

Harris said the Wisconsin County Forest Association was pleased with the result.

“It really was an unbelievable achievement, and I really think it speaks to the high level of professionalism and preparation in those counties, particularly Bayfield and Douglas counties, which have pretty large forests with accomplished forest staffs,” Heyde said. “They’re just doing really good work.”

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources holds the parent certificate for managed forests in the state. County forest programs can volunteer to become certified through one or both certification programs. Of Wisconsin's 29 county forests, 27 participate to ensure forests are managed in a sustainable way.

### **Sustainable Forest Initiative**

More than 360 million acres of forestland from Canada to the southern United States is certified the Forest Management Standards developed by the Sustainable Forest Initiative.

Governed by the three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally, the board is responsible for overseeing and improving the standards to protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk and forests with exceptional conservation value.

Its forest management standards are updated every five years to incorporate the latest scientific information and to respond to emerging issues in the forestry industry. Its most recent standard, 2015-19 has been extended to 2021.

## **Forest Stewardship Council**

Ten principles guide any forest operation that receives certification through the Forest Stewardship Council. These principles cover a broad range of issues from maintaining high conservation values to community relations and workers' rights, as well as monitoring the environmental and social impacts of the forest management.

FSC also provides a number of criteria relating to each principle to provide practical ways of working out whether they are being followed.

The principles were developed to be applicable worldwide and relevant to all kinds of forest ecosystems, as well as a wide range of cultural, political and legal settings.

# Pixelle Specialty Solutions to Acquire Specialty Paper Business From Verso Corporation

*Establishes Pixelle As Largest Specialty Papers Business in U.S.*

November 12, 2019 08:21 AM Eastern Standard Time

SPRING GROVE, Pa.--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--[Pixelle Specialty Solutions \(“Pixelle”\)](#), one of the largest specialty paper producers in North America in terms of annual production, has signed a definitive purchase agreement to acquire specialty paper mills in Jay (“Androscoggin”), ME and Stevens Point, WI from Verso Corporation. The transaction is anticipated to close in the first quarter of 2020.

The Androscoggin mill has the capacity to produce approximately 425,000 tons of paper per year and currently produces flexible packaging papers, release liner base, specialty labels, kraft papers and linerboard. The Stevens Point mill has the capacity to produce approximately 210,000 tons of paper per year and currently produces coated flexible packaging papers, release liner base, thermal papers, and other specialty labels.

Upon closing, Pixelle will be the largest specialty paper business in the U.S. in terms of annual production, with industry-leading positions in a broad range of products including high-speed inkjet, machine glazed (MG) & machine finished (MF) papers, release liner, thermal base paper, trade book paper, carbonless, greaseproof, and coated one side (C1S) specialties. Pixelle will operate four mills (Androscoggin, ME; Chillicothe, OH; Spring Grove, PA; and Stevens Point, WI), three of which have on-site pulp mills, with a total of 12 paper machines and the capacity to produce more than one million tons of paper annually in aggregate. Additional operations will include a converting facility in Fremont, OH and wood fiber sourcing operations in strategic wood baskets in Maine, Maryland, Ohio and West Virginia.

Pixelle was formed in 2018 by [Lindsay Goldberg](#), a private investment firm that focuses on partnering with families, founders, and management teams seeking to actively build their businesses. Steven Klinger, a Lindsay Goldberg Affiliate Partner, and his management team have more than 150 years combined experience in the paper and packaging industries and have worked together previously at Georgia-Pacific and Smurfit-Stone. Lindsay Goldberg has significant prior experience investing and building value in the paper and packaging sectors. Notable investments include [Golden West Packaging Group](#) and [Crown Paper Group](#), where Mr. Klinger also serves as Executive Chairman.

Mr. Klinger, commenting on the agreement to purchase the mills, said, “When we created Pixelle, we stated that we would leverage our differentiated, customized approach to manufacturing to help Pixelle build on its great reputation

with customers and strengthen its positions in the specialty paper markets it serves. Since then, we have made significant progress and we believe there are still many opportunities to continue to drive growth and enhance our operations. Through the addition of these two mills, we are positioning Pixelle for the future and look forward to continuing to be the best supplier and partner for our customers.”

Pixelle President Tim Hess added, “We are very excited about the new specialty capabilities and talented workforce that will be added to our portfolio. With Lindsay Goldberg’s resources, industry experience and management talent, combined with Pixelle’s skilled workforce and world class assets, we are building a high-performance, specialized business for our customers.”

Credit Suisse and Citizens Bank are serving as financial advisors and Cravath, Swaine & Moore is serving as legal advisor to Pixelle on the transaction.

## Contacts

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212-651-1158







# MEMO

**To:** Forestry/Recreation Committee  
**From:** Tom Lovlien, Forest Administrator *TL*  
**Date:** December 3, 2019  
**Re:** 2020 Meeting Dates

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## Meetings begin at 12:30pm

Tuesday, January 7	212 River Drive, Room 2
Tuesday, February 4	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, March 3	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, April 7	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, May 5	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, June 2	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, July 7	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, August 4	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, September 1	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, October 6	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, November 3	212 River Drive, Room 3
Tuesday, December 1	212 River Drive, Room 3

## Wausau and Marathon County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department Forestry Division 2020 Work Plan

<b>Personnel:</b>	Forest Administrator	1.00 FTE
	County Forester	0.80 FTE
	Director	0.06 FTE
	Department Clerical Support	0.50 FTE
	Maintenance Specialist (labor)	0.26 FTE
	Maintenance Technician (labor)	0.26 FTE
	Recreational Officer (Sheriff)	0.04 FTE
	DNR Cooperative Assistance (State Funded)	0.35 FTE
	 Total	 3.27 FTE

### A. Timber Management:

1. Evaluate a minimum of 5% of the forest (1500 acres) and update compartment reconnaissance.
2. Establish and advertise 625-675 acres of timber for sale. Timber sale acreage and locations are determined using the Wisconsin Forest Inventory and Reporting System (WisFIRS) and proposed harvest maps in chapter 900 of the County Fifteen Year Comprehensive Plan. Specific locations and details about timber harvests scheduled for the coming year can be obtained by contacting the County Parks, Recreation and Forestry Office.
3. Administer the cutting and scaling of 26 timber sales on 1711 acres established on County Forest Land with an estimated stumpage value of \$1,383,051.96.
4. Administer the cutting and scaling of one timber sale on 23 acres at Mission Lake Park with an estimated stumpage value of \$12,472.65.
5. Allow forest succession to naturally convert some oak and aspen stands to hardwood.
6. Complete deer browse surveys at Big Eau Pleine Park and on County forest lands to determine to what extent tree regeneration is being affected.
7. Complete year two utilizing a \$31,200 DNR Sustainable Forestry Grant to remove undesirable invasive species, brush and trees at Kronenwetter and Leathercamp forest units to allow for oak regeneration.
8. Classify habitat types on a minimum of 1000 acres.
9. Calculate allowable harvest levels out 20 and 30 years to ensure sustainability.
10. Evaluate 35-40 year-old aspen stands to determine feasibility of harvesting stands early to improve age class distribution and stabilize harvest levels.
11. Issue approximately 25 firewood permits.
12. Release 2019 planting of white pine and white spruce at Kronenwetter Forest Unit.

13. Evaluate release needs for all acres of red pine planted since 2002. Release plantations by mechanical or herbicides as needed.
14. Continue to assist the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources with an oak wilt study to confirm the frill-girdle-herbicide method to stop the disease from spreading through interconnected root systems.
15. Plant approximately 500 red pine at the Miller Forest Unit.
16. Continue implementing the policy on annosum root rot disease requiring contractors to spray conifer stumps with fungicide to prevent infection according to DNR recommendations.
17. Establish timber sales on selected park properties as directed.
18. Monitor timber sales for unauthorized timber removal using the video detection system.
19. Monitor, evaluate, and treat oak wilt pockets in Nine Mile and other Forest Units.
20. Monitor, evaluate, and treat invasive species on the forest.
21. Apply techniques that reduce the ash component in forest stands on County forest and Park lands according to DNR recommendations due to Emerald Ash borer being found in the County for the first time in 2017.

**B. Road, Trail, and Facility Construction and Maintenance:**

1. Continue the contract with APHIS for beaver control.
2. Inspect county forest and park boundaries as needed to control encroaching uses from neighboring private land owners.
3. Contract with professional land surveyors to complete surveys where needed to facilitate administration between County Forest and private lands.
4. Mow 50 miles of hunter walking trails and associated wildlife openings.
5. Mow all forest road ditches in the County Forest.
6. Maintain pit toilets at Bitzke Nature Trail, Burma Road and Nine Mile Forest Units.
7. Continue to assist law enforcement for illegal tree stands, unauthorized motorized use, and dumping on County Forest property.
8. Continue to assist law enforcement to enforce seasonal closures and ordinance violations at Nine Mile and other Forest Units.
9. Resurface up to 3 miles of trails in Kronenwetter and Burma Forest Units.
10. Maintain 6.48 miles of certified County Forest Roads.
11. Fabricate and install gates where needed.
12. Place granite on roads and trails in Forest Units to patch holes as needed.
13. Check the National Heritage Inventory Database (NHI) and the Wildlife Action Plan for endangered resources on any project that occurs on the County Forest.
14. Complete a County Conservation Aids project at Duane Corbin Shooting Range Park that replaces shooting benches.
15. Complete a County Conservation Aids Project at DC Everest County Park that replaces boat planks and asphalt near the landing.
16. Replace culverts in Leathercamp, Kronenwetter, Nine Mile, Harrison-Hewitt and Burma Forest Units as needed.

17. Continue mitigation of the 2010 flood using a FEMA grant at the Bern Forest Unit.
18. Check the National Heritage Inventory (NHI) for any “occurrences” on any project on County Forest lands.

**C. Land and Equipment:**

1. Negotiate the purchase of additional lands to enter as County Forest that will improve blocking, facilitate management and aligns with the Marathon County Strategic and County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plans.
2. Maintain all vehicles and equipment.

**D. Developed Recreation (Non-Motorized):**

1. Participate in the planning, administration and approval of all trail construction, expansions, relocations, and maintenance on County Forest Lands.
2. Monitor reconstruction of 2 km of the Nine Mile ski trail to improve trail profile and surface characteristics.
3. Assist park facilities division in administering intensive recreation at Nine Mile.
4. Utilize volunteers to brush up to 20 km of ski trail.
5. Monitor the non-motorized recreation on County Forest Land.

**E. Developed Recreation (Motorized):**

1. Participate in the planning, administration, and approval of all trail construction, expansions, relocations, and maintenance on County Forest Lands.
2. Monitor and approve reconstruction of the Burma Road Forest ATV/UTV trails.
3. The Central Wisconsin Trailblazers ATV/UTV club will maintain 11 miles of ATV/UTV trail in the Burma Road Forest to include brushing, grading, signing, and mowing.
4. Assess all trails and land in the Burma Road Forest to protect the resource from excessive soil erosion and to prevent illegal off-trail use.
5. Volunteers will brush up to 30 miles of snowmobile trail on County Forest Land.
6. Monitor the snowmobile program on County Forest Land.
7. Monitor and enforce ordinances pertaining to the unauthorized motorized use (ATV/UTV) on all County Forest Units.

**F. Wildlife Management (Partially Grant funded):**

1. Complete work identified in the DNR annual wildlife work plan. (See attached plan).
2. Mow flowage dikes, forest trails and select openings for brush control.
3. Seed select forest trails following timber sales to enhance wildlife habitat.
4. Improve forest opening condition through mechanical and chemical applications.
5. Cooperate with the DNR on identifying tag alder to shear in the Harrison-Hewitt and Leathercamp Forest Units.
6. Cooperate with the Ruffed Grouse Society and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on tag alder shearing in Harrison-Hewitt Forest Unit.

**G. Administration and GIS:**

1. Implement the 2006-2020 County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
2. Complete revisions of the 2021-2035 County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan and obtain County Board and Department of Natural Resources approval.
3. Develop and improve the Forestry Division portion on the Department's web page.
4. Continue to work with the Forest Citizen's Advisory Subcommittee for county forests to address issues of concern including use conflicts at Nine Mile during the fall season, the sustainability of mountain biking, equestrian user needs, and the impact of forest management on hunting.
5. Amend the County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan to reflect ordinance, boundary, and policy changes.
6. Continue implementing marking guidelines, Best Management Practices for Invasive Species and Biomass Harvesting guidelines on the County Forest.
7. Attend the Annual DNR integrated planning meeting to evaluate, maintain, and improve the County/DNR partnership.
8. Develop interpretive displays explaining the benefits of sustainable forest management for display at recreation areas.
9. Monitor and administer all road use, land use, and other agreements/leases currently on County Forest Lands. Develop new agreements or leases when appropriate.
10. Implement and monitor third party Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) forest certification on the Marathon County Forest.
11. Coordinate integration of the County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan with the Marathon County Comprehensive and Strategic Plans.
12. Continue to implement the DNR Wisconsin Forest Inventory Reporting System (WisFIRS).
14. Follow the Bern Flowage emergency action plan, if required, due to flooding.
15. Review county zoning to ensure alignment with the County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
16. Apply for grants and permits that accomplish County Forest and Park land improvements.
17. Supervise the County Forester and other seasonal employees.

18. Continue to educate the new Wausau and Marathon County Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director on County Forest management.
19. Continue to be part of an administration team working on strategic planning and other initiatives to meet Department and County goals.

#### **H. Public Outreach/Professional Development:**

1. Participate in school career programs and make at least two classroom presentations on forestry and natural resource management.
2. Attend County sponsored training including IDEAS, inclusivity and other management as required.
3. Participate in job shadows introducing students into the forestry profession.
4. Continue to assist the public with insect, disease, and timber management information.
5. Give tours on the County Forest including UW-Stevens Point and the Forestry/Recreation Committee as time allows.
6. Attend appropriate professional development training.
7. Maintain membership in the Society of American Foresters.
8. Attend Forest Certification training as required.
9. Continue to work with the Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) by serving as a member of the Legislative/Forest Certification Committee on issues affecting County Forests.
10. Continue involvement on numerous WCFA committee's advancing the practice of forestry.
11. Participate in the revision of the WCFA strategic plan 2020-2025.
12. Continue updating maps to be included in new Forest Unit brochures and website for the public.
13. Revise and develop recreational maps for the public including cross country skiing, snowmobiling, equestrian and single track mountain biking for County Park and Forest lands.

# 2020 MARATHON COUNTY FOREST WILDLIFE WORK PLAN

This represents the 2020 Annual Wildlife Work Plan, pursuant to the fifteen-year Comprehensive Plan for the Marathon County Forest.

## Personnel

For the first time in several years, the DNR Wildlife Biologist and Wildlife Technician positions assigned to Marathon County were filled throughout the year. The DNR Area Wildlife Supervisor position is currently vacant but is planned to be filled during the fall of 2019. Assistance to the County Forest Administrator and DNR Liaison Forester will be provided in all wildlife matters concerning the County Forest.

## Flowage Management

Water levels on most Marathon County flowages were above average during spring, summer and fall of 2019 due to above average precipitation. Managers monitored flowages to keep them at ideal water levels throughout the year. Waterfowl production and sightings were variable on Marathon County flowages. Beaver issues and damage were above average, and their presence prevented some water manipulation activities.

### **Dike Maintenance:**

Muskrat and beaver holes on the flowage dikes are usually patched to maintain the integrity of the dikes. Steinke Pond had extensive damage due to beaver and was repaired by a contractor during the summer of 2019. The other dikes were checked, but rodent damage was minimal, and repairs were not needed.

The USDA-Wildlife Services was contracted to trap and remove problem beaver in 2019 due to increased beaver numbers and issues. The USDA removed beaver at East Flowage in Nine Mile, Whiskey, Swamp and Lower Nienow flowages in the Harrison-Hewitt forest unit, and Steinke Pond at Bitzke Refuge. In 2020, DNR plans to contract with USDA-Wildlife Services to trap beaver on the flowages due to increasing beaver damage. DNR wildlife is also exploring additional payment options for beaver damage.

Nienow, Nine Mile East #1 and Birch flowage dike tops were mowed, and dike slopes of these flowages were brushed and treated with herbicides to prevent regrowth.

### **Bern Flowage:**

Bern flowage is chronically affected by floating cattail masses that have moved to the Northeast side of the flowage. These cattail masses occasionally plug the dam. Contractors have removed cattails for several years along the dike and weir with an excavator. This technique has proven to be effective at keeping the water flowing and water levels stable. There are still cattails that need to be removed from the flowage as they move closer to the weir. A contractor is scheduled to remove cattails during November of 2019 and will continue to remove cattails in 2020 as needed.

## **Wild Rice:**

Wild Rice production varied on many flowages in 2019. Rice production was slightly higher on Lower Nienow and Lower Leo flowages compared to previous years. Patches of rice were seen at Nienow, Leo and Swamp flowages in the Harrison-Hewitt unit and the East #2 and Birch flowages at Nine Mile. In October of 2019, managers purchased 115 lbs. of wild rice and seeded Leo and Lower Leo flowages.

## **Flowage Management:**

Planned flowage management for 2020 includes a continuation of the flowage drawdown rotation. All the flowages will benefit from being drawn down periodically (~ every 5 years). Drawdowns reduce undesirable plant species, allow desirable plant species to germinate and return nutrients to the soil. The drawdown plan for 2019 called for drawdowns on Steinke and Nienow flowages. All the boards were pulled at Steinke flowage, but it never reached full draw down with the large amount of precipitation received. Nienow flowage was not brought down due to various reasons. In 2020, managers plan to draw down Nienow flowage and leave Steinke drawn down for another year. We will also plan to draw down the Nine Mile East #2 flowage if beaver do not prevent it.

## **Herbicide treatments:**

In 2019, exotic invasive species were sprayed on 8.5 miles of dikes and trails between flowages. In 2020, managers will spray thistle, tansy and spotted knapweed on dikes and trails as needed.

## **Forest Management**

### **Openings Management:**

Maintaining early successional habitat, such as grass openings, is an important part of Central Wisconsin forest management. In 2019, seventeen forest openings were treated and another three were field checked with no management needed (28% of the total) in the Harrison-Hewitt, Kronenwetter, Leather Camp, Nine Mile and Burma units. The openings were treated with mowers, brush saws, chainsaws and/or herbicide applications. Thirty-four openings were scheduled to be managed in 2019. The openings not managed will be added to future work plans.

In 2020, wildlife staff plan to manage twenty-seven openings in Harrison-Hewitt, Nine Mile, Leather Camp and Ringle forest units.

### **Trails:**

Several forest trails (~ 2.4 miles) on the Kronenwetter and Leather Camp units were seeded with a clover/grass mix in the spring and summer of 2019. Seeding trails post-logging prevents erosion and provides a valuable food source for ruffed grouse and other game and non-game species. Trails and log landings will be seeded in Marathon County in 2020 as requested by Marathon County Forestry staff.

### **Alder Management:**

Approximately 18 acres of alder was mowed on three sites in Leather Camp during January of 2019. Managers have set a goal of mowing 10-20 acres of alder during the winter of 2019-20. Meeting these goals will rely on acceptable weather conditions as well as having equipment and an operator available. Contactors may be hired to accomplish this work if DNR staff and/or equipment are unavailable. Multiple sites in Leather Camp County Forest Unit have been identified for alder mowing. Additional sites in Harrison-Hewitt will be selected as another option.



## Grasslands/ Hoffman Farm

In 2019, managers planned to conduct a prescribed burn on Unit 4 of the Hoffman Farm. Due to very wet conditions and burn priorities, this burn was not accomplished.

The large burn unit south of County Road G is scheduled to be burned during the fall of 2020. The firebreak will need to be installed during the summer of 2020 to accomplish this burn.

### 2019/2020 Nickel-an-Acre Budget

The following table lists the 2019 Nickel-an-Acre project budgets and expenses. It also includes proposed 2020 projects and the associated spending plan.

<b>Project Activity</b>	<b>2019 Budgeted</b>	<b>2019 Expended</b>	<b>2020 Budgeted</b>
Flowage Maintenance (dikes, spillways, structures)	\$500	\$0	\$500
Flowage Maintenance (brush/cattail removal-dikes)	\$400	\$0	\$500
Wildlife Opening Maintenance	\$400	\$0	\$500
Trail Seeding	\$100	\$0	\$100
Wild Rice Seeding	\$400	\$440.80	\$400
Alder Management	\$500	\$500	\$500
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,300</b>	<b>\$940.80</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>

After all expenses are subtracted, the Nickel-an-Acre account balance at the end of 2019 should be \$2907.20. This will increase to \$4,321.53 after deposit of the 2020 allotment.

Submitted by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brandon Stefanski, DNR Wildlife Biologist, Marathon County

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Napierala, DNR Wildlife Technician, Marathon County

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Lovlien, Marathon County Forest Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Arnold Schlei, Chairperson, Marathon County Forestry/Recreation Committee

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Chad Keranen, DNR Forestry Liaison, Wausau

RESOLUTION #R - \_\_\_\_\_ - 19

**TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL COUNTY FOREST WORK PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, Marathon County has lands enrolled in the Wisconsin County Forest Land Program commonly referred to as the Marathon County Forest; and

**WHEREAS**, the Marathon County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan requires an annual work plan to be approved by the Marathon County Board of Supervisors to be eligible for certain grant funding per §28.11(5)(b), Wis. Stats.; and

**WHEREAS**, the Forestry/Recreation Committee approved the 2020 Forestry Division Work Plan at its regular meeting held December 3, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, the Marathon County Board of Supervisors adopted the 2020 Wausau and Marathon County Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department Budget at its budget meeting November 14, 2019.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the County Board of Supervisors of the County of Marathon does hereby ordain and resolve as follows: To approve and adopt the attached 2020 Forestry Division Work Plan.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED AND RESOLVED**, that the County Clerk is directed to issue checks pursuant to this resolution and the Treasurer to honor said checks.

Dated this 17<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019.

FORESTRY/RECREATION COMMITTEE

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ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Fiscal Impact Estimate: No Budgetary Tax Levy Impact. If the Resolution is not approved, the County would lose \$62,472.00 State Grant Funds.

**APPLICATION FOR COUNTY FOREST ACREAGE SHARE LOAN PAYMENT**

**WHEREAS**, Counties having lands entered as “County Forest Lands”, under the provisions of Sec. 28.11(4)(b), Wis. Stats., annually receive from the state a non-interest bearing loan to be used for the purchase, development, preservation and maintenance of such lands; and

**WHEREAS**, said loan monies are repaid through a 20% severance tax on timber revenue coming from County Forest Lands unless a higher rate is mutually agreed to by the County and the department; and

**WHEREAS**, the current provisions of Sec. 28.11 (8)(b)1 make it possible for the County, at its option to receive not more than 50 cents per acre to meet the needs identified in its County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Marathon, in consideration of meeting the needs identified in its County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan hereby request the Department of Natural Resources to provide the 2020 payment to the County on the basis of 50 cents for each acre of Marathon County Forest Lands; and

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED AND RESOLVED** that the Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to file this request with the Department of Natural Resources prior to December 31<sup>st</sup> preceding the year in which said payment is being requested to be made.

Dated this 17th day of December, 2019.

FORESTRY/RECREATION COMMITTEE

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ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Fiscal Impact: Wausau and Marathon County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department will receive \$14,811.24 as an interest free loan to be used for forest maintenance, development and land acquisition.