

Clearinghouse Rule 14-036

Report to
Legislative Council Rules Clearinghouse
NR 47.75, Wis. Adm. Code
Natural Resources Board Order No. FR-07-12

Wisconsin Statutory Authority

Section 28.11 (5r), Wis. Stats.

Federal Authority

N/A

Comparison of Adjacent States

This rule/grant is not similar to rules in any adjacent states. The County Forest Program, as established by s. 28.10 and s 28.11 Wis. Stats., is unique in the nation, in terms of the partnership and roles of the State and participating counties in the management of County Forest lands.

Court Decisions Directly Relevant

None

Analysis of the Rule - Rule Effect - Reason for the Rule

This proposed rule would create a new grant program, which would allow additional flexibility for County Forests to select the optimal combination of resources provided to each by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Presently the DNR Division of Forestry (DOF) provides assistance to County Forests, aligning workload with the statutory role of the DNR in oversight of the County Forest program. An agreed upon number of hours are provided to each county based on the workload for that particular county. The DOF's Strategic Direction process in 2011-12 realigned forest resources to better accomplish the DOF's mission in Wisconsin's Statewide Forest Plan. As part of that process, each County Forest was given the opportunity to request a modification of the allocation of resources provided by the Department among a suite of grants and the hours of technical forestry assistance the DOF provides to best meet their individual needs. Several counties (Clark, Eau Claire, Iron, Jackson and Langlade) desire to reduce their technical assistance from DNR staff in exchange for funding that would allow them to hire contractors or seasonal staff to accomplish similar forestry work. The thought is that some of the forestry tasks may be done adequately using potentially lesser paid seasonal or contracted staff, with the end result being the ability to get more work done with the same amount of resources. The proposed grant program is structured to focus on accomplishing tasks already identified in the time standards agreement for each county, which guides what activities have typically been accomplished by DOF staff. This funding would provide for on-the-ground sustainable forestry practices with funding from appropriation 20.370(5)(bw).

Agency Procedures for Promulgation

Remaining procedure for promulgation includes: public hearings, Natural Resource Board final rule adoption, legislative review, Secretary signature and publication.

Description of any Forms (attach copies if available)

None

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