

Forest Enterprise Areas with MFL

The primary purposes of MFL is to provide a continual flow of wood and wood fiber for our forest industries and to provide additional recreation opportunities for the public through a reduced property tax program.

The definition of a Forest Enterprise Area is “a land area that is locally targeted for forest preservation and development. Tax credit for the municipality and other landowners would be higher if local forestland preservation zoning is in place. A forest Enterprise Area would be part of a larger strategy to promote forest and forest related enterprises. The strategy may include other local initiatives such as zoning, purchase of conservation amenities, land purchase, land donation, development grants, and cooperative agreements, regulating flexibility, financial incentives and related strategies”.

1. The county or town would initiate the application for FEA designation and would organize the effort at the local level.
2. The FEA designated area must be in a county or town approved planning area to protect forestland.
3. 10 pilot areas would be authorized in the first two years of the program.
4. Minimum size for the FEA is 2,000 acres of which 1,000 must be in MFL. It may include other forestland including non-MFL planned or non-planned land and farm forestland.
5. Towns would receive \$1 an acre for the MFL acreage in addition to present aids paid out of the forestry account for creating the FEA. Counties would receive 50cents. Forestland owners could receive additional tax reduction for providing recreational opportunities.

By authorizing the FEA we would:

1. Support local zoning to protect forest areas.
2. Reduce forest fragmentation and parcelization.
3. Create a block of forestland for recreation and increase access opportunities.
4. Reduce forestland owner property taxes in MFL FEA areas while returning this reduction to townships and county government.
5. Satisfy the demand for public access for recreation in return for tax reduction in a “mimi-public recreation area”.
6. Implement the strategy plan goal of the DNR Forestry Division and Wisconsin Council on Forestry to create larger blocks of forestland for management purposes. (This is particularly important in the southern half of the state where parcel entries in MFL land to be smaller.