

**WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE
THE USE/NONUSE OF SCHOOL FORESTS
BY WISCONSIN SCHOOL DISTRICTS
THAT OWN ONE?**

by

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ABSTRACT

This project examined the factors that influence the use/nonuse of school forests by Wisconsin school districts that own one. In the past 74 years, 342 schools have received parcels of land to be utilized as a school forest. These forests total approximately 24,907 acres of land in Wisconsin. Some schools have done an excellent job developing their school forest. But, due to various limiting factors some of this land has been left unused for many years by other school districts. This land is a valuable resource that is not being used properly. Strategies need to be determined as to how this property can be better used for educational purposes.

There are four subproblems within this project. The first was to identify the Wisconsin school districts that own school forests. This was done by combining information from the University of Wisconsin – Extension; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry; and the Wisconsin Forest Resources Education Alliance.

The second was to create a tool to measure the school usage of their school forests. A survey was created to accomplish this task. The survey included topics such as whether or not the district has a school forest coordinator, distance to site, facilities at the site, usage, who presents the programs, and a ranking of factors that hinder the use of the school forest.

The third was to conduct the survey of the school districts regarding their forests use/nonuse and to compile the data. The surveys were mailed in early May 2001 to 170 school district administrators (response rate = 76%, n=130). In

general, most school forests are 1) within 10 miles of the school, 2) lack facilities such as shelters, restrooms and drinking water, and 3) are used less than 10% of the school days.

The fourth subproblem was to identify recommendations that will aid schools to better utilize their school forests. Contacting the nonuse school districts and passing on to them information concerning how they can develop and utilize their forests will, accomplish this task. Work is also being done by an ad hoc committee to create a state wide school forest system, including a coordinator.

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Thanks to my parents, who even now, continue to push me to finish my schoolwork. And thank you to my late grandpa, John Belden, who instilled in me an appreciation for the environment.

The biggest thanks of all though go out to my wife, Lisa and son, Jared. Without their support and love none of this would have ever gotten started or finished.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgments.....	v
List of Charts.....	vii
List of Appendices.....	viii
Introduction.....	1
Literature Review.....	4
Methodology.....	13
Results.....	18
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	34
Bibliography.....	37
Appendices.....	39

LIST OF CHARTS

<u>Chart</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Frequency Of Use Of School Forest	18
2	Length Of Stay At Your School Forest	20
3	Does Your District Have a School Forest Coordinator	21
4	Is Your School Forest Coordinator a Paid Position	22
5	Average Distance to Your School Forest	23
6	Does Your School Forest Have Adequate Parking	24
7	Does Your School Forest Have A Shelter	25
8	Does Your School Forest Have A Heated Shelter	26
9	Does Your School Forest Have Overnight Sleeping	27
10	Does Your School Forest Have Drinking Water	28
11	Does Your School Forest Have Bathrooms	29
12	Does Your School Forest Have A Pond, Lake, or River	30
13	Does Your School Forest Have Nature/Hiking Trails	31
14	Who Presents The Programs	32
15	Factors That Hinder The Use Of The School Forest	33

LIST OF APPENDICES

<u>Appendix</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
A	Cover Letter	40
B	Survey	41
C	Survey Data	43
D	Wisconsin's School and Community Forests	45
E	DNR Foresters by County	57
F	School District Administrators List	61
G	Eden Koljord Letter	65
H	School Forest Meeting Agenda	66
I	Forestry Issue Brief: School Forests in Wisconsin	67
J	Application for Registration of a Community Forest	70

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Statement of the Problem

What factors influence the use/nonuse of school forests by Wisconsin school districts that own one?

The Subproblems

The First Subproblem: To identify the Wisconsin school districts that own school forests.

The Second Subproblem: To create a survey to measure the school usage of their school forests.

The Third Subproblem: To survey school districts regarding their use/nonuse of their school forests and to compile the data.

The Fourth Subproblem: To identify recommendations that would aid schools to better utilize their school forests.

The Hypothesis

School forests in the state of Wisconsin are being underused. Some of the reasons, for nonuse, may include: lack of inservice and lesson plans, transportation issues, and facility issues such as lack of restroom, shelters, and drinking water. Usage could be increased if these issues could be addressed by the school districts.

The Delimitations

The First Delimitation: The study will be limited to Wisconsin school districts that own a school forest.

The Second Delimitation: The study will not be sent to every school in the identified district, but rather one survey will be sent to the district administrator.

The Definition of Terms

School forest- A piece of property owned by a school district that is intended to be used for outdoor, agricultural or environmental education. It also includes property owned by the local FFA chapter.

The Abbreviations

EE is used for environmental education.

DNR is used for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

DPI is used for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

UW-EX is used for the University of Wisconsin – Extension.

WCEE is used for the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education.

WFREA is used for the Wisconsin Forest Resources Education Alliance.

The Assumptions

The First Assumption: There exist school districts which own school forests that are not being used.

The Second Assumption: There exist school districts that would like to use or increase their use of unused or underused school forests.

The Significance of the Problem

In the past 74 years, 342 schools have received parcels of land to be utilized as a school forest. These forests total 24,907 acres of land in Wisconsin. Some schools have done an excellent job developing their school forests. But, due to various limiting factors some of this land has been left unused for years by other districts. This land is a valuable resource that is not being used properly in many school districts. Strategies need to be determined as to how this property can be used better for EE. This can be done by contacting representatives of the schools in Wisconsin which own school forests. The purpose of contacting them is twofold. First to determine from those districts utilizing their forests, what contributing factors have and are playing a role in its use. By finding out the key factors in their success, the nonusing school can be aided, which is the second purpose.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Historical Look a School Forests in Wisconsin

The idea for creating Wisconsin school forests originated in Australia. “In 1925, H.L. Russell, Dean of the UW-Madison College of Agriculture, was traveling in that distant land and came upon a novel scene – publicly owned lands being planted and cared for by school children as an educational project” (Peterson 1986). The northern Wisconsin forests, during the 1920’s, had been over harvested and exposed to fires this left counties with large amounts of tax delinquent land. So, with Dean Russell’s help, the Wisconsin legislature, in 1927, agreed to allow schools to own land for forestry purposes. The first of the school forests was started in Forest County by Crandon, Laona, and Wabeno schools. To date there have been 342 school forests created in Wisconsin, totaling 24,907 acres of land. “most tracts of land were gained when school districts took title to tax-delinquent lands deeded by counties....for a small purchase price, often only \$1” (Gilson-Pierce 1994).

The original concept was to have the schools plant trees on their land. In 1935 legislation was passed in Wisconsin, mandating conservation education in schools. The planting of trees was further aided in 1949 when “more legislation passed giving school forests free trees furnished by the Wisconsin Conservation Department (now DNR)” (Peterson 1986). During the past 74 years, the direction that school forests have taken has greatly varied. Some school districts have built

very extensive forests including: buildings, such as classrooms, kitchens, dormitories, and museums; nature, hiking, and skiing trails, man made ponds; and obstacle courses. And, other school forests have remained dormant for many years. Today, an estimated 170 school districts own school forests made up of one or more parcels of land.

The Role of School Forests in Environmental Education

“Just as the environment is an integral part of our lives, so education about the environment must be an integral part of the learning process.” (Wilson 1991). A key in developing an appreciation for the environment is to spend time outdoors. One of the ways of doing this is by spending time at a school forest. After all, “the best education about the environment is through direct experience in nature.” (Eagles 1992). If this time can be spent in a learning situation, then we can accomplish two goals at one time. We are educating and we are developing this appreciation for the environment. “One of the most effective and pleasurable ways of learning is through hands-on experience” (Dolin 1985). If we are going to teach about nature and the environment through hands-on experience then where better to teach than in the outdoors. There is an ancient Chinese proverb “I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand”. If we want our students to “understand” the environment then the best place to “do” environmental education is outside. “The school forest is a laboratory. It is a place to teach by observation and performance.” (Trenk 1960).

But it is not as easy as just going outside. “You will have confusion and discipline problems with outdoor teaching unless you religiously do two things: start slowly and plan well” (Paine 1985). In addition to this, the more frequently that the students are taken outdoors, the more comfortable and controllable they will become. They will learn that the outdoors can also be a place for learning. “School forests...are providing by far the greatest number of forest ‘contact days’ by students, teachers and school officials.” (Trenk 1961).

The role then of the school forest is to provide a site on which learning about the environment can take place. It is a location, for example, that students can go to plant trees and observe their development over the years. By doing activities like this, they create an ownership of the environment. “Compared with traditional classroom activities, this tight fit between subject matter and external environment increases learning potential enormously” (Dilon 1985).

Benefits of a School Forest

“A strong school forest program:

- Fosters a sense of pride and belonging within students.
- Encourages the development of research, communication, problem-solving, consensus building, critical thinking, and leadership skills.
- Offers students’ real-life, hands-on experiences in responsible citizenship and citizen action.
- Demonstrates the complex interrelationships of the natural world and the complexity of environmental issues.
- Develops within students a working knowledge of conservation, management, and stewardship of natural resources.
- Demonstrates to students what can be accomplished when dedicated groups of people work together.
- Connects academic studies to real-life learning experiences and to the community.
- Allows students to learn in a variety of ways, including cooperative learning, mentoring, active learning, and service learning.

- Encourages students to develop care and concern for the environment and to examine their environmental values.
- Gets students outdoors on a regular basis so that their young minds can thrive in a stimulating environment.” (Mittermaier 2001)

In addition to the benefits to the students, school forests can be beneficial to teachers, school districts, communities, and wildlife. Teachers can be provided with a site to conduct in-services and workshops. It can provide a long-term living laboratory in which experiments can be conducted. It can provide teachers the opportunity to see their students in a different kind of learning environment. It can also provide an opportunity to do cross-curriculum work and to incorporate the states environmental education components into their curriculum.

The benefits to the school district might include the following. The school forest can be a source of income, in the form of logging or maple syrup. It can be used as a basis of the district’s environmental education plan. It could also become a showcase to the community for some of the things the students are learning in school.

The community can benefit because the school forest can provide a place for recreational activities such as hiking or cross country skiing. It also “brings together organizations, businesses, and educational institutions to form partnerships for stewardship....serves as an example to other landowners in the area by demonstrating effective natural resource management techniques and planning” (Mittermaier 2001).

School forest can be a benefit for wildlife as well. Students can learn what is required for a healthy habitat and work towards making improvements within their school forest. “When learners begin looking for clean water, fresh air,

healthy soil, and plants that provide food to support wild animals, they reinforce their own understanding of the needs of people.” (Wild School Sites 1993).

The school forest can be a site that is utilized year around and by all content areas. The art class can do drawings and photography. English can read about Thoreau, Frost, and Leopold. The family and consumer education classes can learn about outdoor cooking over an open fire. The list of options is endless. “Day by day in the winter, as well as in the spring and fall, classes from the kindergarten through the senior high are booked, months ahead of time, to take up definite problems in English, history, mathematics, and a surprisingly long list of other subjects that take on reality in the forest.” (Taylor 1957).

“A school forest is intended to be primarily an outdoor laboratory, available to all grades and courses, which provides real experiences for both boys and girls....These experiences when jointly planned and shared, can stimulate desirable growth and cooperative action of both youth and adults in the community.” (Peterson 1964). A school forest is a site that can be used, and be a benefit to all those involved. Whether it be the students, teachers, administration, community or the wildlife.

How to Develop a School Forest

How to develop a school forest is the biggest problem that many schools face. Teachers and administrators are often unsure where to start and they may not be aware that help is available to them. The first step to take would be to form a school forest committee. “This committee might include; an elementary,

middle, and high school teacher, an administrator, a member of the support staff, several students of different ages, and community members of different age levels and occupations” (Budiash and Nevala).

To have the cooperation of a wide variety of committee members will be invaluable. It will help to insure that what is created will be a long lasting venture. “Unfortunately there are many tracts now on the community forest register that are no more than legal descriptions of land. These school forest programs ceased with the passing of an early, spirited leader. To insure effective continuity, the responsibility for developing and maintaining an active school forest program should not rest with one individual, but rather with a joint school and community committee.” (Peterson 1959). The committees’ job is to develop a short term and a long range plan. They “should start with a vision – a statement of what you want the urban forest to be at some point in the future.” (A Handbook for Tree Board Members 1993). They can get the ball rolling, by contacting potential resource people. Examples include the “Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, Colleges and Universities, Wisconsin Conservation Corps...local government agencies, and local contractors” (Budiash and Nevala). Others who may help would include local service organizations such as the Lions or scouts. All of the resource people can offer individual services, labor, and/or financial support.

Assuming that property is owned by the school district, one of the first steps in development should be to conduct a site inventory. “The purpose of the site inventory is to maximize sustainable human usage of the site, while

minimizing long term environmental degradation.” (Blythe 1994). Once the committee knows what is on the site and where it is located, a plan for potential development can be created including a plan of action.

The next step would involve implementing the plan. Again they should include a variety of people including students, staff, and community members. The last step should include some form of evaluation. “In planning your projects, devise a way to evaluate your successes and failures...Evaluation is an often-overlooked aspect of most projects, but including it in your planning will have rewards long after your project is complete.” (Nielsen 1996).

Previous Wisconsin School Forest Research

In the past there have been three other surveys of school forest usage in the state of Wisconsin. In 1958 the State Department of Public Instruction conducted the first survey. The second survey was conducted, in 1962, by Russell Kostrzak, a graduate student at the University of Michigan. The third survey was conducted in 1999 by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry.

The 1958 survey found that 84% of the schools responding were using their forests for 10 or less field trips per year. This raised to 87% in 1962. Both of the early surveys found that the main subjects studied at the school forest were agriculture and science. The main activities conducted while the students were at the forest, were tree planting and forest management. (Kostrzak 1962).

Kostrzak had four goals in his 1962 study: “1) to determine changes in school forest usage between 1958 and 1962; 2) to determine reasons for the change; 3) to determine whether or not any correlation exist between the number of students using the forests and the various aspects of the school forest programs; and 4) to formulate suggestions and courses of action to bring about and increase in participation.” Kostrzak concluded that school forest usage had increased but not tremendously. He found that size and distance were limiting factors in a forests use. Other problems that he described were inadequately trained teachers, conflicts in class schedule, lack of transportation, and lack of cooperation from other teachers and administration. His suggestions for change consisted of sixteen points, some of which are included here. He suggested changing the name of the sites from “school forests” to “outdoor laboratories”. He also suggests training for administrators as well as teachers. Kostrzak recommended that schools should own their school forest and that it should be at least 40 acres in size and be as close to the school as possible. (Kostrzak 1962).

The 1999 survey conducted by the DNR was a rather extensive survey. It consisted of an eight page questionnaire concerning different aspects of school forest interest including utilization, curriculum, facilities, resource management, and finance. The study concluded the following:

- 80% of schools with school forests had at least one parcel within 5 miles of the school.
- School forests appear to be underutilized by schools due to budget and scheduling constraints.
- Nearly a third were used by students fewer than 5 times per year.
- An additional quarter reported their forest was used 5-10 times per year.

- Major barriers to use of school forests for teaching included time constraints due to class scheduling, distance to the school forest, and lack of a developed curriculum.
- School forests with more facilities...were used more frequently.
- 73% of the school forests had an annual budget of \$500 or less.
- The single greatest expense associated with the use was transportation.
- Only 48% of the school forests had a written school forest management plan. (Krantz 2001).

Questionnaire Design and the Use of Mailed Surveys

The key to the success of a project such as this lies in the quality of the questionnaire created and the percentage of the people who respond. To develop a good questionnaire Sudman and Bradburn (1982) suggest the following rules; 1) Restrain the impulse to write specific questions until you have thought through your research questions, 2) Before the questionnaire can be developed, clearly stated objectives for the project should be identified.

In addition to the creation of the questionnaire, a cover letter and a follow-up letter will need to be written. "It (the cover letter) serves to introduce the survey and hopefully motivates the respondent to immediately pick up the questionnaire, fill it out, and , just as expeditiously, return it." (Dillman 1978). Equally important is the follow-up letter. "A questionnaire that lies unanswered for a week or more is not very likely to be returned....the postcard follow-up is not written to overcome resistance, but rather to jog memories and rearrange priorities." (Dillman 1978).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this project will be addressed by subproblems. The following time line presents a sequential view of the methodology.

Time Line

Summer 1996

- 1) Initial project plan developed.
- 2) Begin the literature review.
- 3) Meetings with Dr. Wilke and Dr. Yockers to gain insight into possible objectives for the survey and to identify school districts that own a school forest.

Summer 1997

- 1) Continue the literature review.
- 2) Meetings with Dr. Wilke and Dr. Yockers.

Spring 1998

- 1) Telephone conversations with Genny Fannucchi, DNR, and Eden Koljord, WFLA. The purposes of these calls were to get more history of school forests and to compile a list of schools that own forests.
- 2) Meeting with Dr. Bjurquist, Colfax School District Superintendent, to determine how the district could assist with the project.
- 3) Obtain a copy of the Wisconsin School Directory, from Dr. Bjurquist, in order to start creating a data base for the survey mailing.

Fall 2000 – Winter 2001

- 1) Obtain an e-mail address listing of DNR county foresters in Wisconsin. Send each forester a list of school/community forests within their respective county to which ownership was questionable.
- 2) Finalize the data base of school administrators from districts that have been identified as owning a school forest. The Wisconsin Department of Public

Instructions web site was used to accomplish this task. Within their web site is the Wisconsin Public School District Directory.

- 3) Finalize the survey tool and the cover letter that are to be mailed.

Spring 2001

- 1) Meeting with Dr. Wilke to obtain final approval of the survey and cover letter.
- 2) Mailing of the survey.
- 3) Tabulate the survey responses.

Summer 2001

- 1) Continue tabulating responses and construction of charts showing the results.
- 2) Attend an ad hoc committee meeting in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, to discuss the future of school forests.
- 3) Present masters project at UW-Stevens Point.

To Identify the Wisconsin School Districts that Own School Forests

This was by far the most difficult of the four subproblems to complete. The University of Wisconsin – Extension Office has a listing of school and community forests (Appendix D). This list was obtained from Genny Fannuchi, DNR. On the list there were a number of “forests” to which ownership was unclear. A list of DNR county foresters was obtained from the DNR website (Appendix E). An e-mail was sent to each of the county foresters of a county that had unidentified owners of a school/community forest. The e-mail asked for their assistance in determining the ownership of those forests. Through this process most of the owners were identified, but it was not 100%.

To Create a Survey to Measure the School Usage of Their School Forests

The first step in developing the survey was to identify the objectives of the survey. One objective was to break the respondents into two groups; 1) those who were utilizing their forests and 2) those who were not. A question was asked concerning the amount of days the forest was used by the district. Five options were given; less than 10% of the time, 10-30%, 40-50%, 60-70%, and 80-100%. These percents were based on the average usage during a two week, 10 school day, period. The second objective was to determine the proximity of the forests to each of the school buildings within the district. Four options were given for distances; less than a mile, 1-5 miles, 6-10 miles, and more than 10 miles. A third objective was to determine what type of facilities that each school forest contained. This series of questions was aimed at determining if a forest had such features as parking, shelter, bathrooms, drinking water, nature/hiking trails, and natural water features such as a pond, lake, or river. The fourth objective was to determine what type of management, if any, existed. Does the school district have a person designated to oversee the operations of the school forest? Is this a paid position, or is it something that someone has just volunteered to do? The fifth objective was to determine who conducted the instruction at the site. Was the instruction conducted by the regular teaching staff of the district, or did they have outside people. The sixth objective was to determine the average length of stay by a group when they visited the site. Four options were given; 1-2 hours, half a day, full day, more than 1 day. The seventh and final objective was to determine what was perceived to be the limiting factors in the forests use. What roles do class time, planning time, availability of activities, teacher training, and distance play in the use of the school forest. The responding school districts were

also given an opportunity to add their own ideas on how schools could be encouraged to use their forests more for teaching environmental education.

To Survey School Districts Regarding Their Use/Nonuse of Their School Forests and to Compile the Data

The target audience for this survey was school district administrators. They were chosen because of the ease of compiling a data base of administrators (Appendix F).

While the other surveys discussed in the literature review targeted school forest coordinators, for which no data base exists. The other surveys relied on the administrators forwarding the surveys onto the designated person within the district. This was foreseen as a potential spot to misplace surveys and to delay response time. The data base of administrators was compiled using the Wisconsin School Directory, and by using the Wisconsin Department of Public Instructions web page containing the Wisconsin Public School District Directory. The 170 cover letters (Appendix A) and surveys (Appendix B) were mailed in April of 2001. 76% of the surveys were returned and the data was compiled in May and June of 2001.

To Identify Recommendations that Would Aid Schools to Better Utilize Their School Forests

Since the inception of this project, some major developments have taken place. The DNR has become more interested in school forest usage, to the point that they have conducted their own survey of school forest coordinators. The survey by the DNR shows that they have an interest in the development and usage of school forests. A financial undertaking of this scale shows that they are willing to do what it takes to improve usage.

The second major development consists of the Wisconsin Forest Resources Education Alliance's compilation and publication of How to Grow a School Forest: A Handbook of Wisconsin Educators. This publication was mailed out to all school district curriculum directors in 2001. This publication in the hands of school districts should prove to be an invaluable tool.

The third development involves the organization of an ad hoc Wisconsin school forests committee in June of 2001. This committee made a recommendation to the DNR, in August 2001, that a full-time statewide school forest coordinator position be created. In 2002 this position was approved and applicants were being sought.

The fourth development was the creation of LEAF, the Wisconsin K-12 Forestry Education Program. This program was started in 2001 to improve and increase forestry education in Wisconsin by developing an activity guide and providing teacher training, among other goals. The K-8 portion of the activity guide should be available by the fall of 2003, through a graduate level college course. The 9-12 portion will follow in 2004.

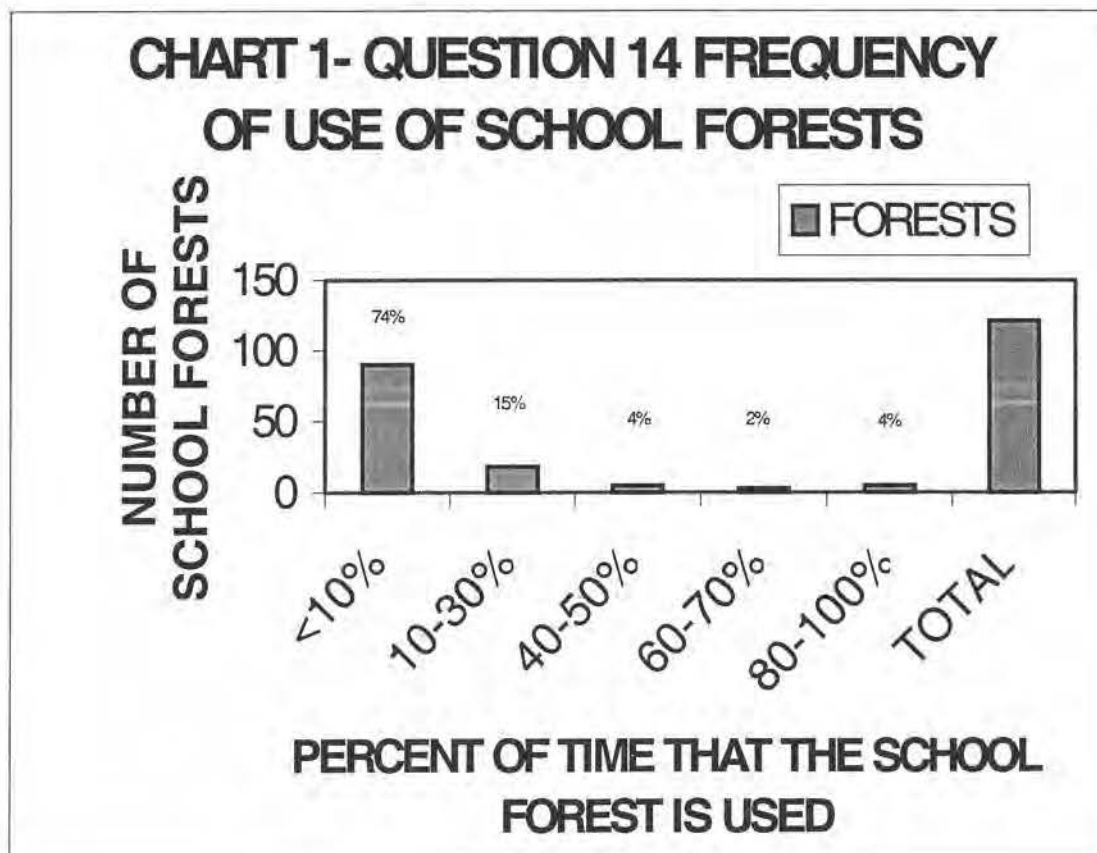
It is my thought that these four developments sum up and surpass my ideas of how to make improvements of school forests. Therefore I have not made any further attempts to disseminate information to nonusing school districts at this time. I would like to work with and assist the future state coordinator in any way possible, as I see this project of mine as an ongoing project.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Frequency Of Use Of School Forests

The intent of this project was to determine if school districts were using their school forests and factors as to why or why not. There was the assumption on my part that a majority of the forests were not being used or are being underutilized, and hence this study. The survey was sent to 170 school district administrators whose districts were believed to have a school forest. Of the 170 surveys sent, 130 (76%) were returned. Of these, 121 acknowledged the ownership of a school forest. The results were in line with my original assumption, 74% of the responding districts reported a use of less than 10% of the available school days. In addition to this lack of use, only 10% of the responding school districts reported using the forest 40% or more of the time.

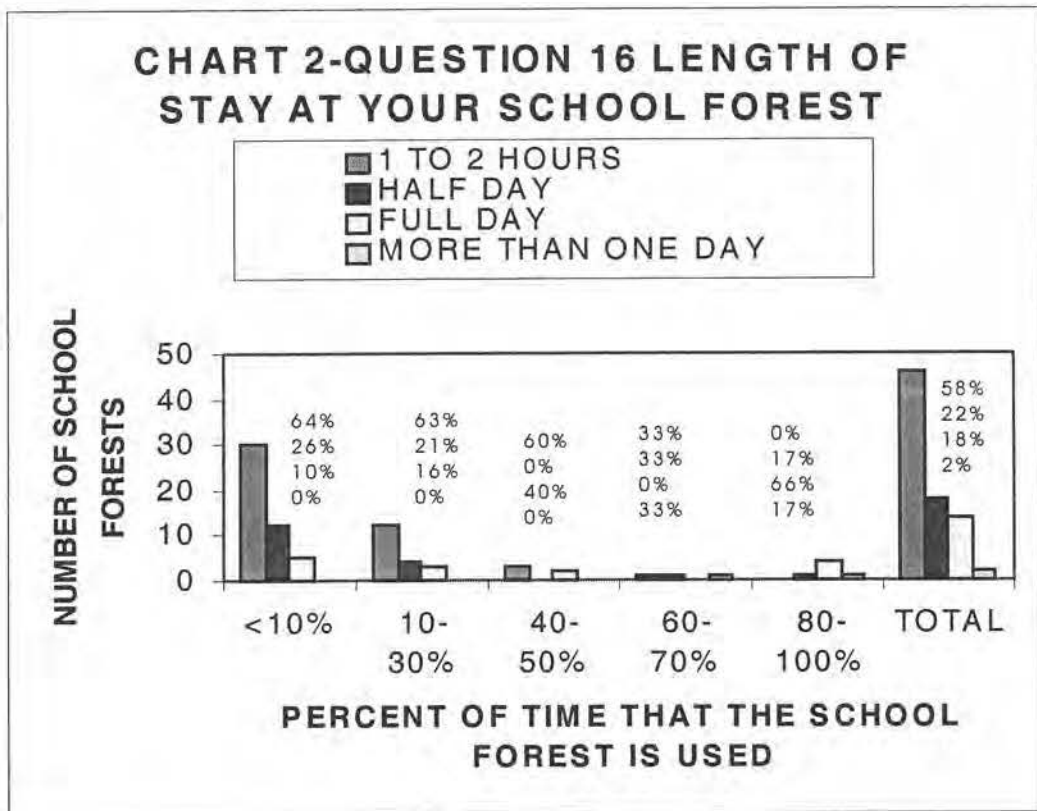


The charts that are used within this chapter have been created using the answers to question 14 as the x-axis. For this reason the entries on all of the following charts will be <10% (schools that use their school forest less than one day every 2 weeks on average), 10-30% (school forests used 1 to 3 days every 2 weeks on average), 40-50% (school forests used 4 or 5 days every 2 weeks on average), 60-70% (school forests used 6 or 7 days every 2 weeks on average), 80-100% (school forests used 8 to 10 days every 2 weeks on average). The <10% group contains 89 school districts, the 10-30% group 18, the 40-50% group 5, the 60-70% group 3, and the 80-100% group contains 5 school districts.

Length Of Stay At Your School Forest

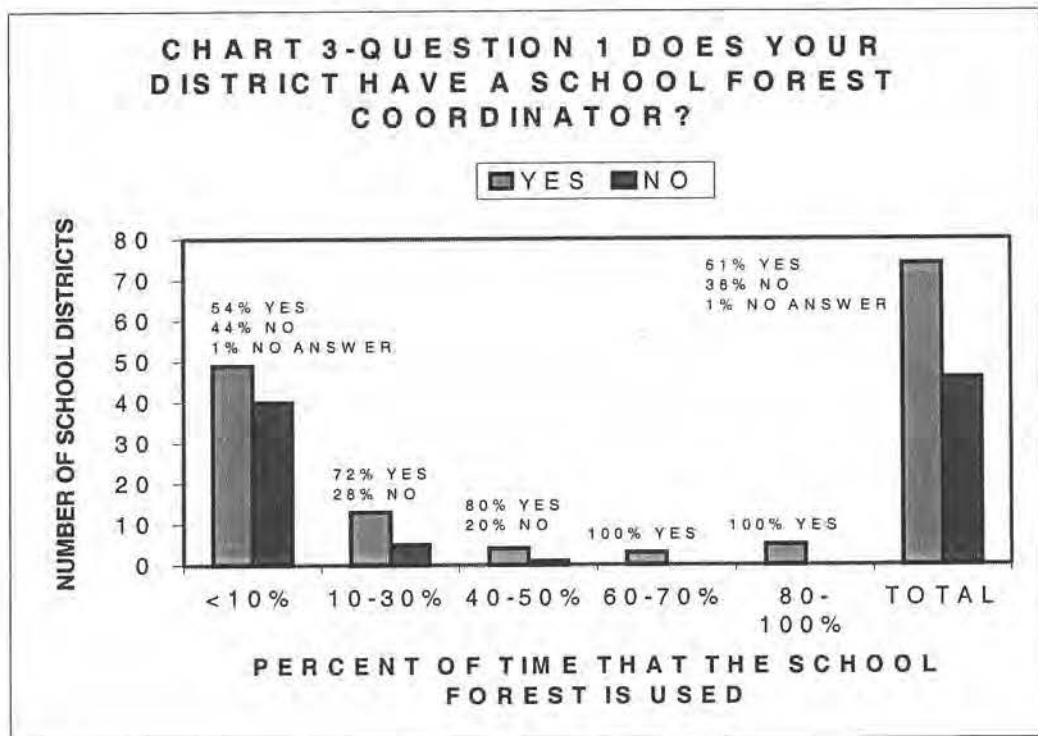
When a school group visits the site how long is the typical stay? This question had four possible responses. The person completing the survey was to break down the length of stay into percentages for each response. The options were 1 to 2 hours, half day, full day, more than 1 day. From the data it can be concluded that the less frequently visited school forests also had the shorter lengths of stay. The <10% group typically had visits of just 1 to 2 hours. Therefore not only are the forests not being used very many days, but when they are visited it is for short periods of time. Another interesting observation from this data involves the most frequently used school forests. As the frequency of use increased (60-100% groups) the length of stay also increased. A correlation could be made here between the length of stay for these two groups and the distance to the school forest (see chart 5). The 80-100% group responded that their average distance to their school forest was 6+ miles and they tended to use their school forest for full day programs 66% of the time. It would make sense that if you have to

travel longer to get there, you should stay for a longer period of time. Why travel 15-20+ minutes each way for a 1 or 2 hour visit?



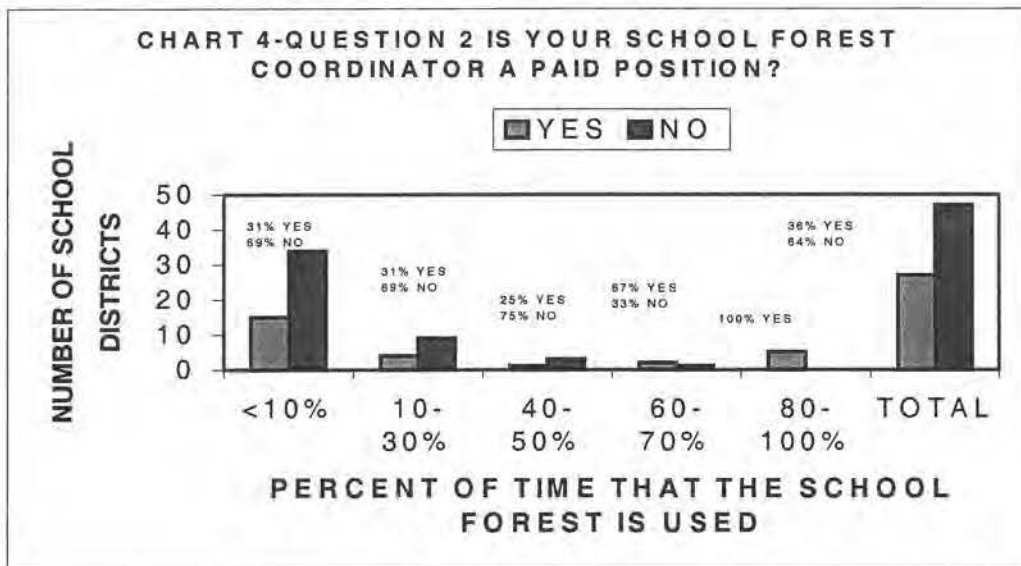
Does Your District Have A School Forest Coordinator?

As for the management of the school forests it was found that 61% of the districts responded that they have a school forest coordinator. For those districts that use their forest 60+% of the time the percent rose to 100% having a coordinator. So as the usage goes down so does the percentage of districts that have a coordinator. For those districts using their forest less than 10% of the time the numbers drop to 54% having a coordinator. In most cases the coordinator was a teacher, in some cases it was the responsibility of an administrator.



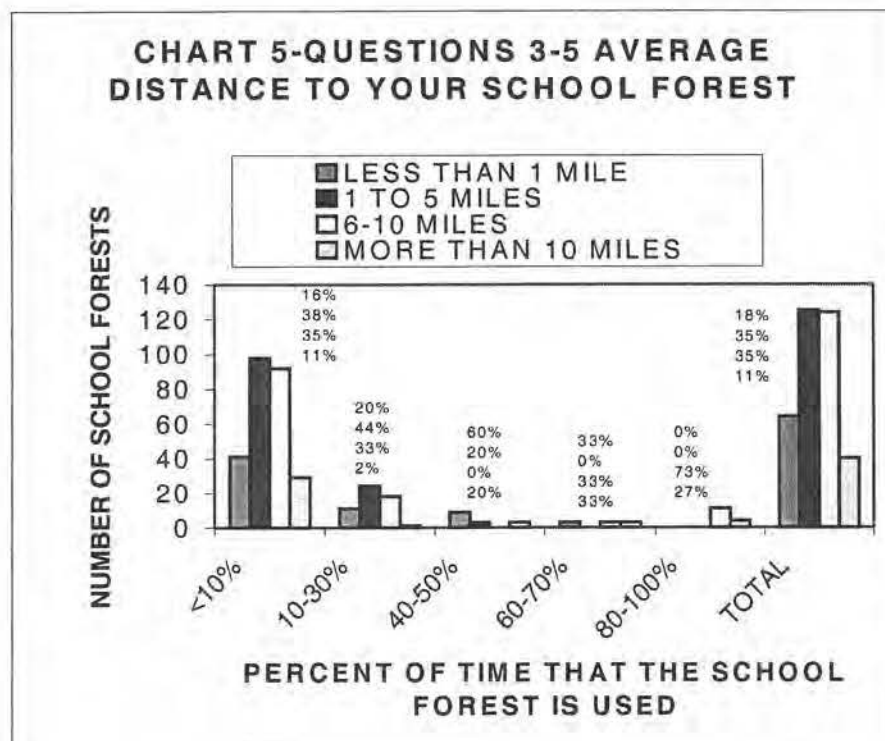
Is Your School Forest Coordinator A Paid Position?

It comes as no surprise that the results were what they were for whether or not the coordinators' position was a paid position. For most school districts the school forest coordinator position is not included in the extra-curricular activities pay schedule. Again, the more frequently the forest was used, the more likely the coordinators position was paid.



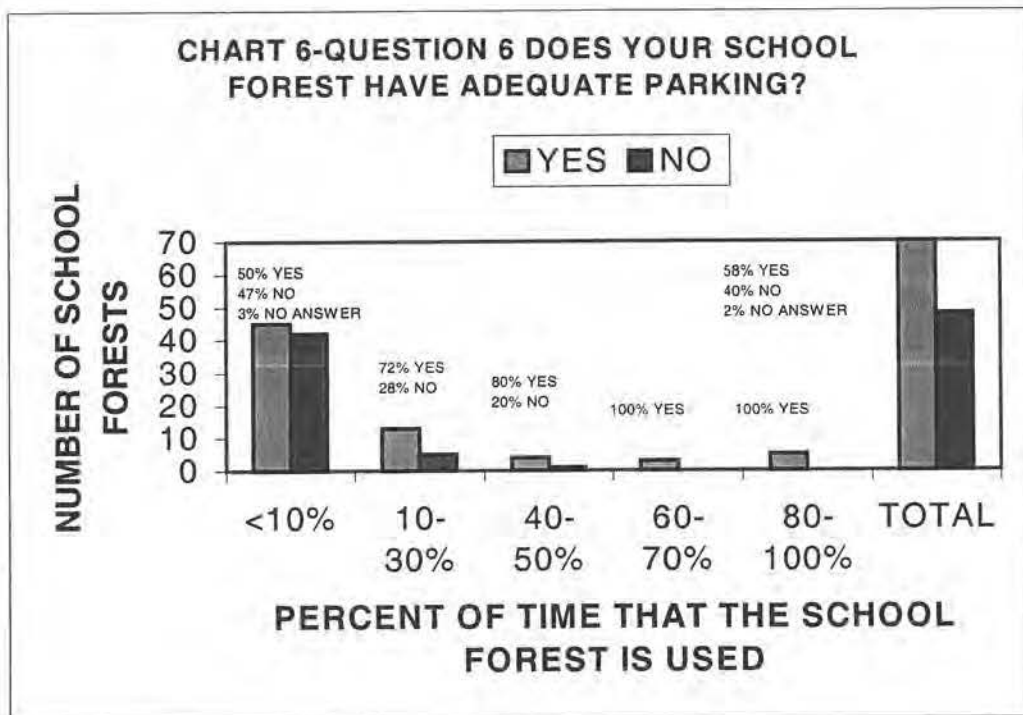
Average Distance To Your School Forest

It was found that 88% of the schools are within 10 miles of the school forests. It is also noted that 53% are within 5 miles. It is also interesting to note that of the most frequently used forests (60-100%) that 87.5% of the schools are 6+ miles from the forests. It would appear as though distances should not be a major factor in the usage of the school forests, as most are reasonably close to the schools. Therefore transportation time should be fairly short. But still if the site is a 15 minute drive from the school that doesn't leave much time for a single 45 minute class. Thus multiple class periods would be required for a visit.



Does The Site Have Adequate Parking?

After considering the distance to the site the next challenge to face is that of parking. A majority (58%) reported that they did have parking at the site. Again, the percent is much higher for the more frequently used sites. Parking becomes an issue with the safety of loading and unloading of students from the bus. Inadequate parking could lead to some safety issues.



Does Your School Forest Have A Shelter And Is It Heated?

The survey concluded that 26% of all school forests have a shelter and only 14% have a heated shelter. The lack of a shelter may influence a teacher's decision as to use the school forest or some other site that maybe within walking distance of the school. If the site lacks a shelter, than a "rainy day" plan would have to be considered. Would you go to the site regardless of the weather or do you plan for another day if it is raining? This can cause transportation problems if you are going to cancel for rain. Or, wet students if you go in the rain. The presence of a heated shelter would permit the use of the site later into the fall and earlier in the spring. Depending on the type of heated shelter, it could also permit winter use thus expanding a site into a year around facility.

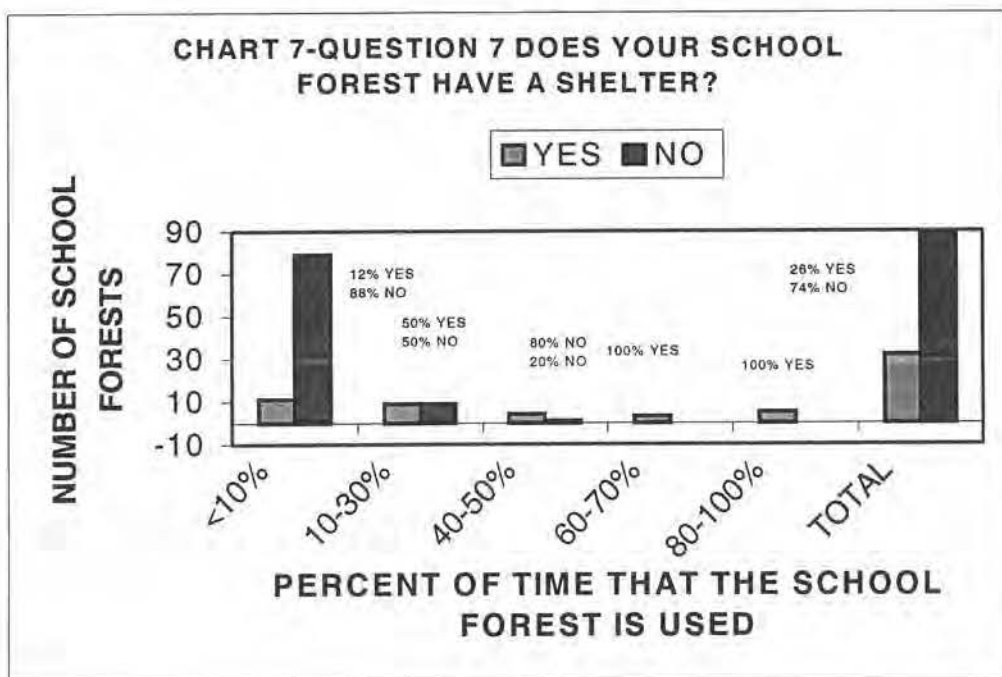
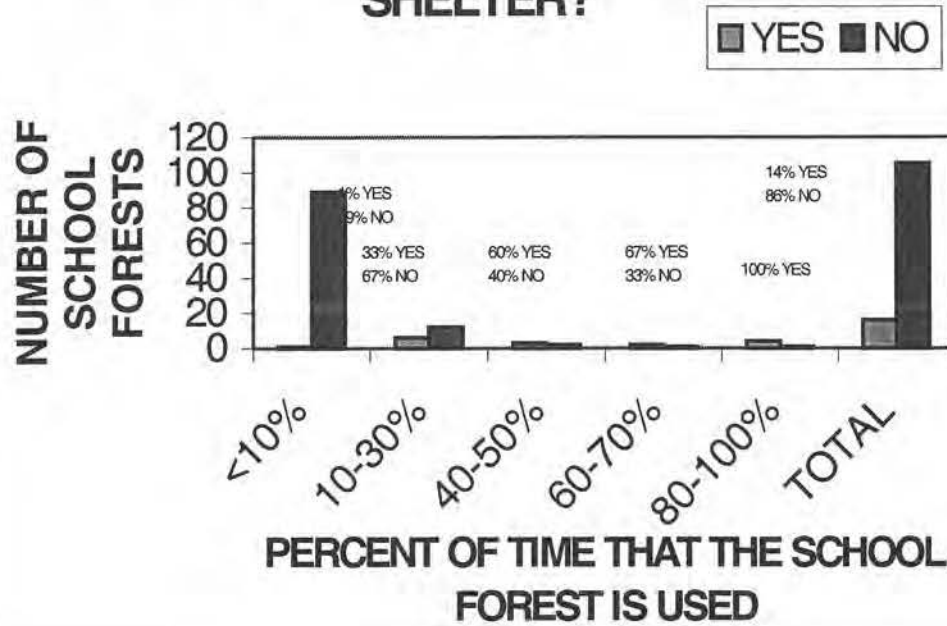
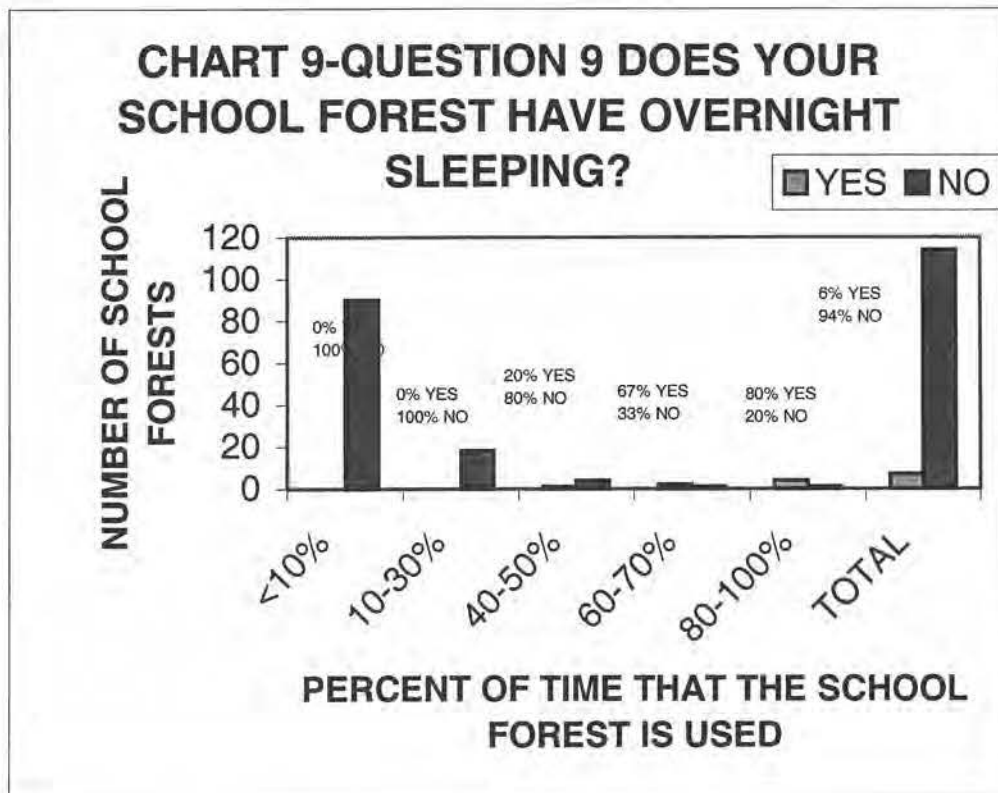


CHART 8-QUESTION 8 DOES YOUR SCHOOL FOREST HAVE A HEATED SHELTER?



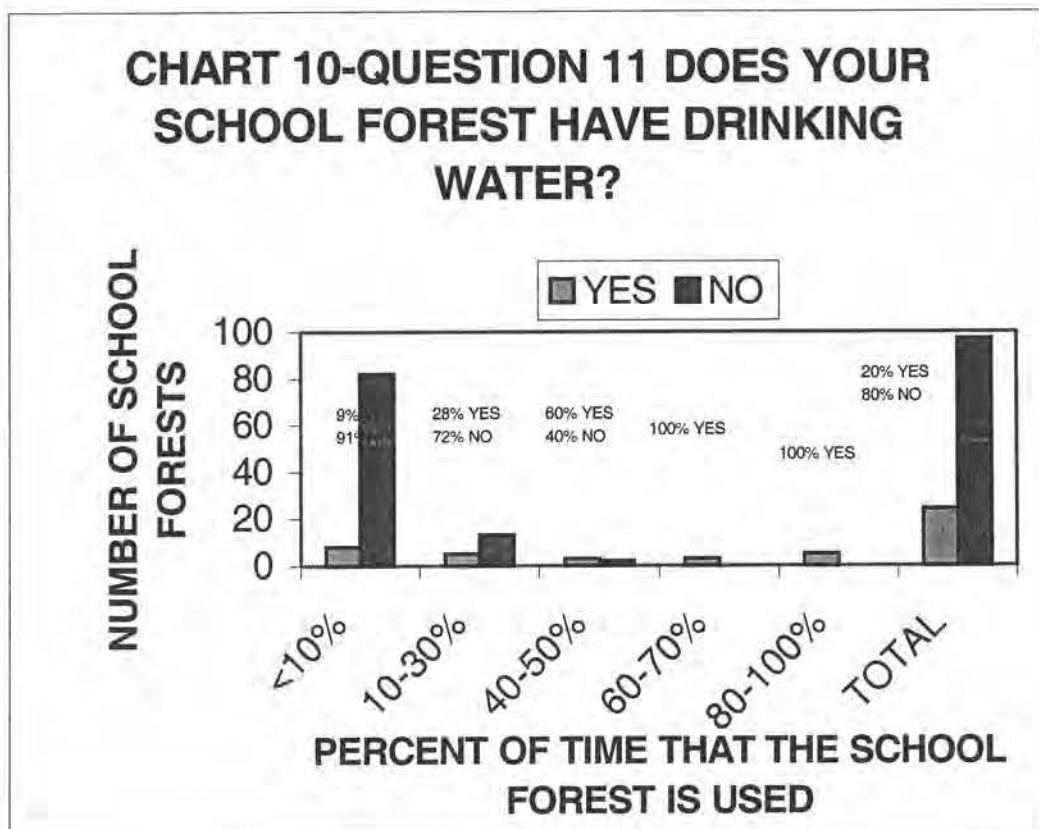
Does Your School Forest Have Overnight Sleeping?

As one might expect, this is the one feature of school forests that occurs the least. There were only 7 school forests (6%) that responded that they have overnight sleeping available. This feature offers the opportunity for extended stays of 2 or more days at the site. It would allow for programs and lessons to extend into the evening hours, such as night hikes, lessons in astronomy and campfire activities.

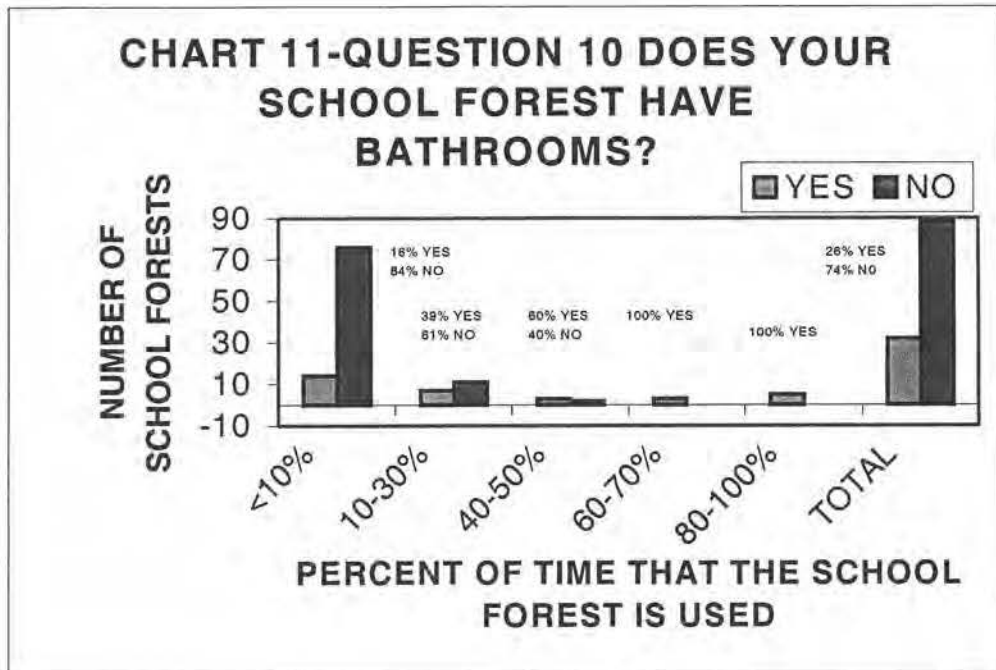


Does Your School Forest Have Drinking Water And Bathrooms?

If a site is going to be used for visits of more than an hour or two in length, then the issue of drinking water and bathrooms may become a health and privacy concern. If a group is only going to the school forest for an hour or two then they can easily bring their own drinking water to the site. But if you are going to be staying for a half day or the entire day, larger amounts of water will be required. It means one more thing that the teacher needs to bring. It was found that only 20% of all school forests have drinking water at the site. The sites without drinking water are among the least used school forests.

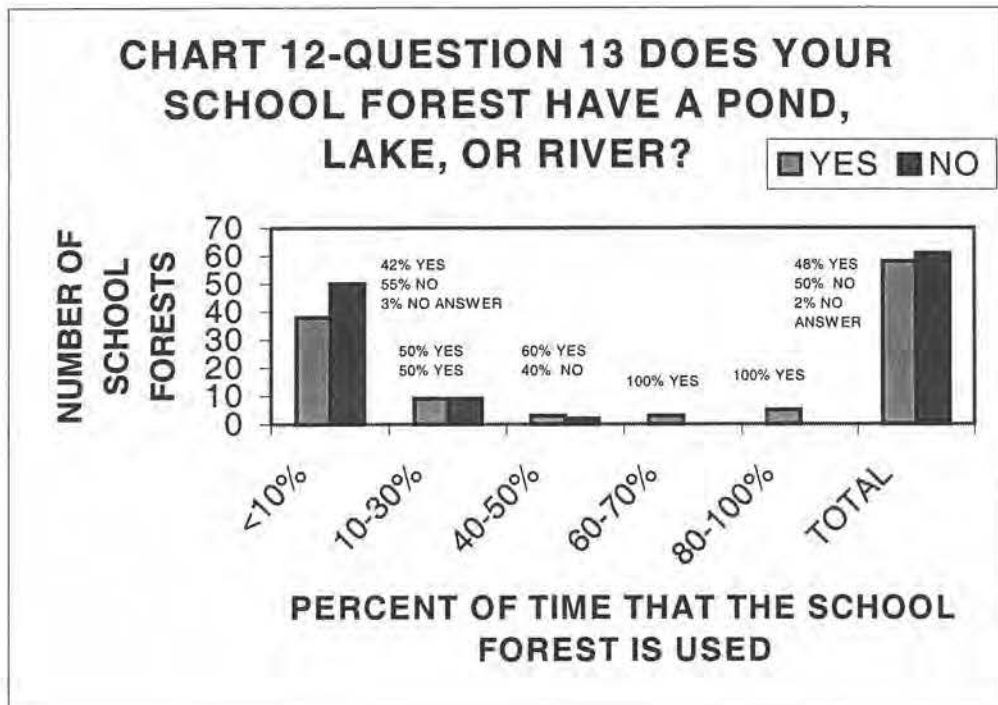


When you have children drinking water, then the need for bathrooms becomes obvious. For short periods of stay, bathrooms would not be as necessary. If you are only going for an hour or two, students can be instructed to use the facilities at the school before leaving. But inevitably you will have a student who “needs to go” when you are at the site. Privacy and health become an issue as the student “goes” behind a tree as the rest of the group continues with their activity. As your length of stay increases then the need for bathroom facilities will also increase. This may also be more of a problem with younger students. The statistics for this question are very close to those of drinking water. Only 26% responded that their school forest had bathrooms.



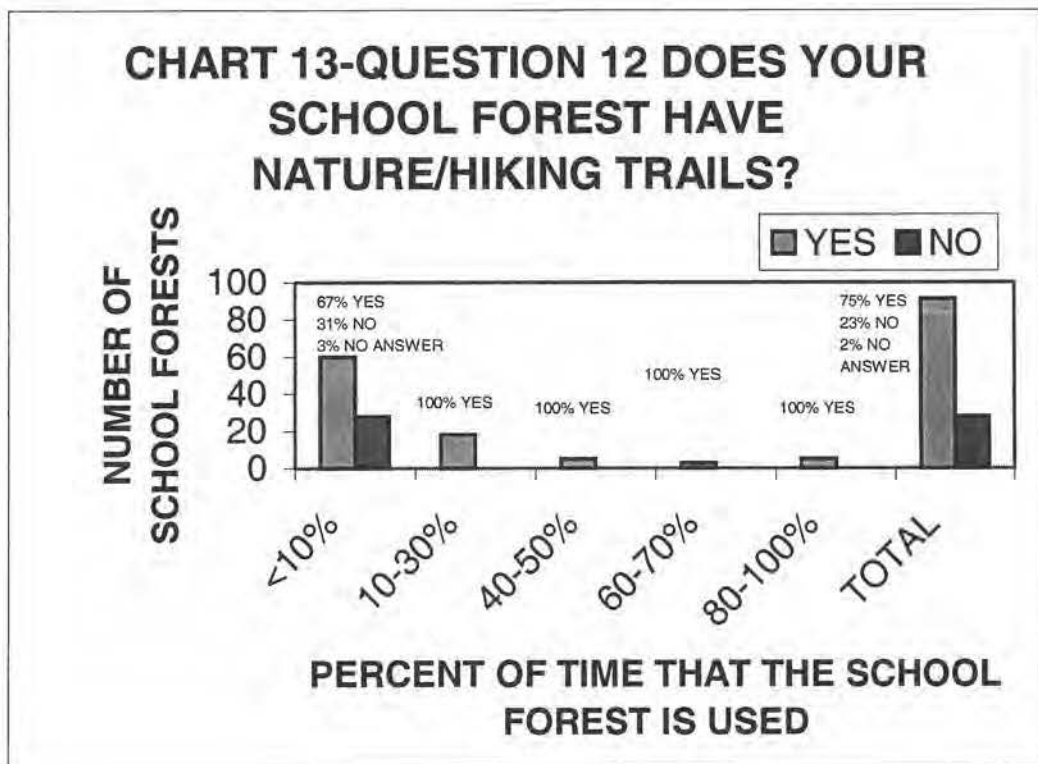
Does Your School Forest Have A Pond, Lake, Or River?

The intent of this question was to determine a level of biodiversity that the school forest might contain. Many school forests are perceived as being pine plantation monocultures. The presence of some type of water source such as a pond, lake or river might be a lure to some teachers because the site is more diverse and offers more fields of study during the visit. It opens up the opportunity to do things like water sampling and testing. A source of natural water also provided for more diversity in plant and animal life. Overall it is a fairly even, with 48% responding that they have a natural water source and 50% stating that they did not.



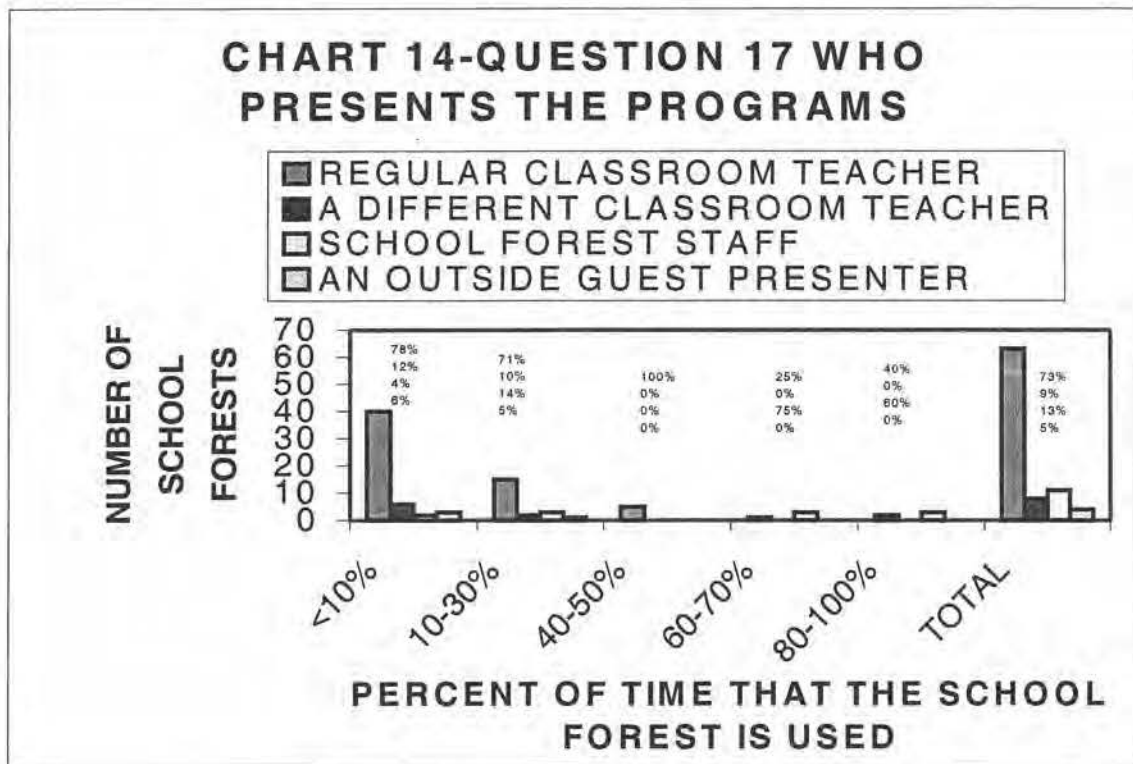
Does Your School Forest Have Nature/Hiking Trails?

When a school forest is created, it would seem that the first order of business is to create some sort of a trail going through it. This is the most common feature in school forests, with 75% of the school districts responding that their school forest contained a nature/hiking trail. This may be part of the financial aspect associated with a school forest. A very simple trail through the woods is the least expensive thing that can be done. It provides some place to go within the forest and a means of getting from one part to another.



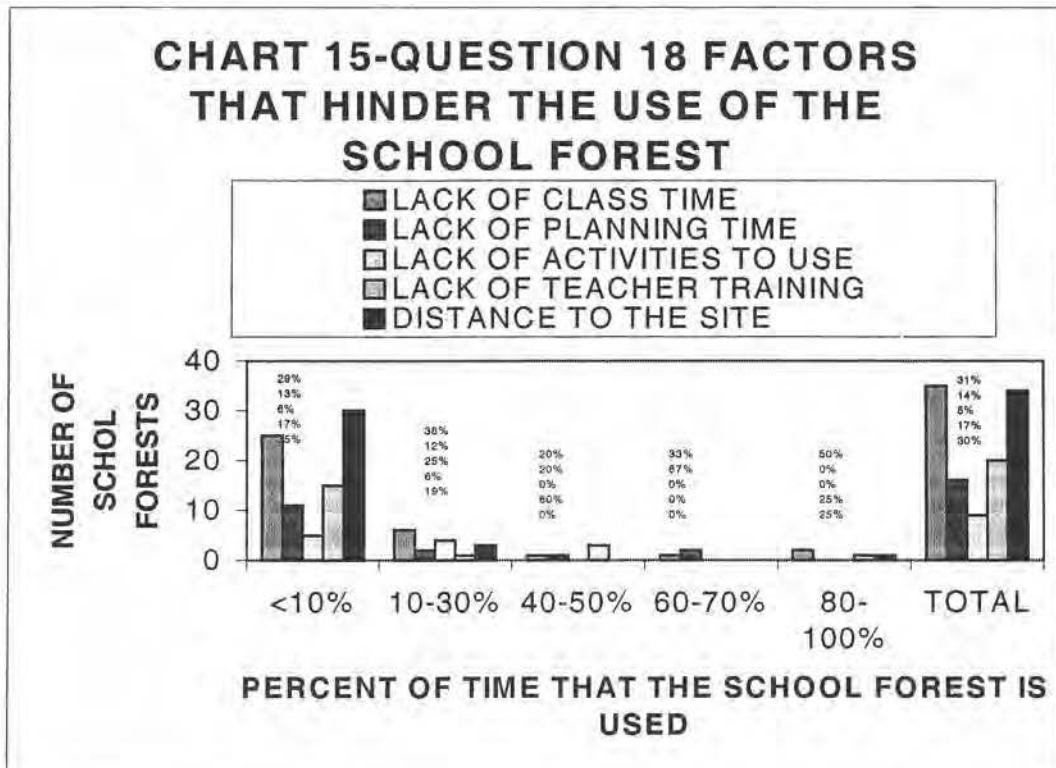
Who Presents The Programs?

The most frequent presenter of programs at the school forest is the regular classroom teacher. They present 73% of the programs. This would tend to make sense when combined with the average length of stay at the school forest being 1 to 2 hours. If a group is only going out for an hour or two, then they are probably going out in a class sized group with their regular teacher. Different classroom teachers, a school forest staff person, and outside guest presenters combined for only 27% of the programs.



Factors That Hinder The Use Of The School Forest

For this question, a close look is given to the <10% group. Of the least used school forests, what do they perceive as being the most significant hindrances in using their school forest. It ends up being fairly close between distance to the site (35%) and lack of class time (29%). In hindsight another option might have been included "Lack of Facilities". This addition might have been wise when viewing the responses. The reason I say this is that for the <10% group, 89% of the school forests averaged less than 10 miles from the schools and 54% less than 5 miles. I would not have expected a distance of less than 10 miles to be a big hindrance. It is unfortunate that the two biggest perceived hindrances are the hardest to change. It is hard to change the distance to the site. It would be a whole lot easier to provide teachers with activities and training. It is good to note that lack of activities is the least of the hindrances. It is encouraging to know that the respondents recognize that there are activities available to them.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

So what then are the factors that prohibit the frequent use of a school forest? I believe that this is a difficult question to answer, even after conducting this survey. Is the school forest not being used because it lacks a coordinator and facilities? Or does it lack a coordinator and facilities because it is not being used? What teacher is going to want to take a group of students, especially young students, out to the school forest for a full day when they know there is no shelter in case it rains and there is no drinking water or bathroom facilities. But at the same time what administrator or school board is going to spend money on a site that is not currently being used?

One option for addressing this issue is to have a county forester create a management plan for the site. Money could be raised for developments if for instance a timber harvest could be arranged. The key here is for the moneys generated from such a sale to be put back into the forest in terms of improvements.

Additional funds could be sought from grants offered by local and national organizations or businesses. One such grant program is available from WEEB (Wisconsin Environmental Education Board). During the 2003-04 cycle, they will be awarding up to \$200,000 in grants. The grants may be used to develop an education plan, educate school board or community members on the benefits of school forests, or to enhance the school forest program and facilities to name a few possibilities. They require a minimum of 25% matching funds, and capital purchases and site enhancement purchases may not exceed 75% of the WEEB funds requested.

As to the issue of distance to the site, there are not many options available here. One possibility could be to conduct a land trade. It might be possible to trade the existing school forest property for a parcel of land that is closer if not adjacent or within walking distance of the school. This would eliminate or reduce the need for transportation and allow a group to visit the site within a single class period. A district would have to be careful of compromising quality for location. A land trade may be arranged with a local governmental unit such as the county or with a private land owner. While this might be a more difficult approach, I have seen it done successfully between a scouting organization and the U.S. Forest Service.

The lack of time, both class time and planning time, will always be viewed as a problem. Unless environmental and/or outdoor education are viewed by the individual teacher as warranting their time and energy this will be a difficult area to change. There has always only been 24 hours in a day and 180 days in a school year. What you do with that time depends on where a teacher sets their priorities. In order for lack of time to be less of an issue, environmental education will need to become more of a priority. A lack of class time could also be an argument to promote block scheduling at the high school level.

As for the lack of teacher training and activities, there is an enormous amount of activities in print for teachers to do with their students at a school forest. Activity guides such as Project Learning Tree, Project Wild, and Project WET offer a wide variety of activities in different subject areas for different aged children. These programs, offered through the DNR, also offer the teachers inservice training into how to use the activities.

If a teacher or administrator is interested in promoting the use of an existing school forest, then they need to understand that they cannot do it alone. They need to seek the help of others within the school and community. A committee should be created so that a lasting program can be created. So often projects die with the moving on or passing away of a key inspirational person. A broader range of ownership in the project needs to be created for a successful, continued school forest program.

A final thought concerns the newly created statewide school forest coordinator position. This position along with the continued support of the Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DPI, WFREA, WCEE, Trees for Tomorrow and other organizations will help to establish a well rooted school forest program for many districts that are currently not using or under using their school forests. I am very excited about this newly created position. It now provides for a person to focus their attention on the school forest issue at the statewide level. This person has the ability to make a strong push for the increased use of school forests. They will be a source of information and support for many struggling school forests.

The lack of use of school forests is not going to be changed over night. It is going to require a lot of work and dedication by many people, from the new state school forest coordinator and others at the state level right down to the local school teachers, students, and communities. With the effort of all of us, we can rebuild the dream of the school forest program as its early supporters such as Dean Russell had envisioned.

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APPENDICES



University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

College of Natural Resources

Stevens Point, WI 54481-3897 (715) 346-2853

FAX (715) 346-3624

Dear District Administrator:

The Wisconsin legislature, in 1927, agreed to allow schools to own land for forestry purposes. The original concept was to have the districts plant trees on lands that had become tax delinquent after clearcutting had occurred. In the past 70 years, 342 school districts have received parcels of land, totaling nearly 25,000 acres, to be utilized as a "school forest." Over the years, some school districts have built very extensive forests including buildings, trails, ponds, and obstacle courses. At the same time other school forests have remained dormant for years.

We are writing to you to request information regarding the use of your school districts' school forest. The information you provide will assist the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education in efforts to facilitate the use of Wisconsin's school forests.

This survey should take only five minutes of your time. Please return it in the self addressed stamped envelope provided. Thanks for your assistance.

Handwritten signature of Patrick Furey.

Patrick Furey
Graduate Researcher

Handwritten signature of Richard Wilke.

Dr. Richard Wilke
UW-Systems
Distinguished Professor of
Environmental Education

School District _____

Your Name and Position _____

- 1) Does your district have an assigned person to oversee the operation of the school forest?
 - A) Yes
 - B) No, go to question 3

- 2) Is this a paid position?
 - A) If yes, then what percent of the persons time is devoted to this postion? _____%
 - B) No

- 3) How far is your school forest from the elementary school? If your district has more than one elementary school, use an average distance.
 - A) less than 1 mile
 - B) 1 to 5 miles
 - C) 6 to 10 miles
 - D) more than 10 miles

- 4) How far is your school forest from the middle school? If your district has more than one middle school, use an average distance.
 - A) less than 1 mile
 - B) 1 to 5 miles
 - C) 6 to 10 miles
 - D) more than 10 miles

- 5) How far is your school forest from the high school? If your district has more than one high school, use an average distance.
 - A) less than 1 mile
 - B) 1 to 5 miles
 - C) 6 to 10 miles
 - D) more than 10 miles

What type of facilities are present on your school forest?

- 6) Adequate parking? A) Yes B) No

- 7) Shelter for inclement weather? A) Yes B) No

- 8) Heated shelter for winter use? A) Yes B) No

- 9) Dormitory for overnight trips? A) Yes B) No

- 10) Bathrooms? A) Yes B) No

- 11) Drinking water? A) Yes B) No

- 12) Nature/hiking trails? A) Yes B) No

- 13) Pond, lake, river? A) Yes B) No

- 14) How often is your school forest used?
 - A) Less than 10% of the time (less than one day every 2 weeks on average) go to question 18
 - B) 10-30% of the time (1 to 3 days every 2 weeks on average)
 - C) 40-50% of the time (4 or 5 days every 2 weeks on average)
 - D) 60-70% of the time (6 or 7 days every 2 weeks on average)
 - E) 80-100% of the time (8 to 10 days every 2 weeks on average)

16) When a school group visits your school forest, what is the typical length of stay? Respond to each choice using a percentage. The total of all 4 percentages should equal 100%.

- A) 1 to 2 hours _____%
 - B) Half day _____%
 - C) Full day _____%
 - D) More than 1 day _____%
- Total = 100%

17) When the groups are at the school forest, who presents the programs to the students? Respond to each choice using a percentage. The total of all 4 percentages should equal 100%.

- A) The regular classroom teacher _____%
 - B) A different classroom teacher _____%
 - C) A school forest staff person _____%
 - D) An outside guest presenter _____%
- Total = 100%

18) Please rank in order the following five factors that hinder the use of the school forest (the factor ranked "1" should be the most important hinderance and the one ranked "5" the least hindering factor).

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Lack of class time	_____
Lack of planning time	_____
Lack of activities to use	_____
Lack of teacher training in use of the school forest	_____
Distance to the site	_____

19) Do you have any specific suggestions for encouraging the use of the school forest as a teaching resource for environmental education?

Thank you very much for your time and effort.

	14 A	14 B	14 C	14 D	14 E	TOTAL
1 A	49	13	4	3	5	74
1 B	40	5	1	0	0	46
2 A	15	4	1	2	5	27
2 B	34	9	3	1	0	47
3 A	13	4	3	1	0	21
3 B	33	7	1	0	0	41
3 C	29	7	0	1	3	40
3 D	11	0	1	1	2	15
4 A	15	4	3	1	0	23
4 B	31	9	1	0	0	41
4 C	32	5	0	1	4	43
4 D	9	0	1	1	1	12
5 A	13	3	3	1	0	20
5 B	34	8	1	0	0	43
5 C	31	6	0	1	4	42
5 D	9	1	1	1	1	13
<1 MILE	41	11	9	3	0	64
1-5 MILES	98	24	3	0	0	125
6-10 MILES	92	18	0	3	11	125
10+ MILES	29	1	3	3	4	40
6 A	45	13	4	3	5	70
6 B	42	5	1	0	0	48
7 A	11	9	4	3	5	32
7 B	79	9	1	0	0	89
8 A	1	6	3	2	4	17
8 B	89	12	2	1	1	104
9 A	0	0	1	2	4	7
9 B	90	18	4	1	1	114
10 A	14	7	3	3	5	32
10 B	76	11	2	0	0	89
11 A	8	5	3	3	5	23
11 B	82	13	2	0	0	97
12 A	60	18	5	3	5	91
12 B	28	0	0	0	0	28
13 A	38	9	3	3	5	58
13 B	50	9	2	0	0	61
14	90	18	5	3	5	121

	14 A	14 B	14 C	14 D	14 E	TOTAL
16 A	30	12	3	1	0	46
16 B	12	4	0	1	1	18
16 C	5	3	2	0	4	14
16 D	0	0	0	1	1	2
17 A	40	15	5	1	2	63
17 B	6	2	0	0	0	8
17 C	2	3	0	3	3	11
17 D	3	1	0	0	0	4
18 A	25	6	1	1	2	35
18 B	11	2	1	2	0	16
18 C	5	4	0	0	0	9
18 D	15	1	3	0	1	20
18 E	30	3	0	0	1	34

WISCONSIN'S
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY
FORESTS

Listing Maintained By:

**UWEX,
Department of Forestry
University of Wisconsin-Madison**

and

**Bureau of Forestry,
Wisconsin DNR, Madison**

April, 98

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>ADAMS COUNTY</u>		
DELLS MEMORIAL SCHOOL FOREST	1950	78
PINELAND SCHOOL FOREST	1956	39
CASTLE ROCK SCHOOL FOREST	1956	37
ADAMS GRADE SCHOOL FOREST	1953	40
CHESTER SCHOOL FOREST	1956	40
ROCHE-CRI GRADE SCHOOL FOREST	1956	40
FRIENDSHIP GRADE SCHOOL FOREST	1952	60
ADAMS-FRIENDSHIP AREA SCHOOL FOREST	1959	40
GRAND MARSH SCHOOL FOREST	1949	84
BROOKS SCHOOL FOREST	1953	20
ADAMS-FRIENDSHIP HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1952	80
ADAMS COUNTY 4-H FOREST	1979	60
<u>ASHLAND COUNTY</u>		
BUTTERNUT SCHOOL FOREST	1944	40
SANBORN SCHOOL FOREST	1941	21
ODANAH SCHOOL FOREST	1932	40
COZY VALLEY SCHOOL FOREST	1929	40
GLIDDEN SCHOOL FOREST	1944	40
ASHLAND COUNTY MEMORIAL FOREST	1949	148
<u>BARRON COUNTY</u>		
TURTLE LAKE SCHOOL FOREST	1956	153
CHETEK HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1954	97
CUMBERLAND SCHOOL FOREST	1944	80
PRAIRIE FARM HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1959	40
RICE LAKE HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1957	40
CAMERON VILLAGE FOREST	1952	50
CAMP PHILLIPS	1954	1400
SPIDER LAKE RECREATIONAL GROUNDS	1958	21
BAPTIST BIBLE CAMP FOREST	1963	40
<u>BAYFIELD COUNTY</u>		
ONDOSAGON SCHOOL FOREST	1954	40
WASHBURN CITY SCHOOL FOREST	1960	40
HERBSTER SCHOOL FOREST	1930	40
DRUMMOND SCHOOL FOREST	1960	40
GRANDVIEW SCHOOL FOREST	1952	40
BLAINE SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
TOWN OF BARNES COMMUNITY FOREST	1993	639
<u>BROWN COUNTY</u>		
PREBLE HIGH FORESTRY LAB.	1971	40
BROWN COUNTY REFORESTATION CAMP	1941	1570
<u>BUFFALO COUNTY</u>		
COCHRANE-FOUNTAIN CITY HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1958	7
ALMA SCHOOL FOREST	?	?

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>BURNETT COUNTY</u>		
TOWN OF GRANTSBURG FOREST	1961	80
GRANTSBURG SCHOOL FOREST	1940	160
SIREN SCHOOL FOREST NO.2	1955	58
SIREN COMMUNITY FOREST	1953	784
SIREN SCHOOL FOREST	1951	40
TRADE LAKE FOREST	1957	40
TOWN OF ANDERSON COMMUNITY FOREST	1961	520
<u>CALUMET COUNTY</u>		
HILBERT HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1978	73
NEW HOLSTEIN NATURE AREA	1968	7
CHILTON SCHOOL DISTRICT FOREST	1976	10
CALUMET COUNTY PARK	1940	30
<u>CHIPPEWA COUNTY</u>		
NEW AUBURN AREA SCHOOL FOREST	1961	71
CORNELL SCHOOL FOREST	1949	80
BLOOMER HIGH SCHOOL FFA FOREST	1943	40
STANLEY SCHOOL FOREST	1939	80
DELMAR TOWN FOREST	1939	80
HOLCOMB SCHOOL FOREST	1950	80
CORNELL JT. DIST. NO.2 SCHOOL FOREST	1957	53
NEW AUBURN SCHOOL FOREST	1937	40
WEST BIG EDDY SPRINGS FOREST	1962	77
CHIPPEWA COUNTY 4-H FOREST	1960	112
CHIPPEWA FALLS SCHOOL FOREST	1986	127
<u>CLARK COUNTY</u>		
COLBY UNION FREE HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1956	20
DORCHESTER HIGH FOREST	1956	80
OWEN-WITHEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOREST	1956	80
NEILLSVILLE SCHOOL FOREST	1953	60
THORP PUBLIC SCHOOL FOREST	1956	80
GREENWOOD SCHOOL FOREST	1949	80
NEILLSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1965	6
GRANTON HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1956	80
CONWAY PARK	1954	30
<u>COLUMBIA COUNTY</u>		
PORTAGE HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1952	34
LODI SCHOOL FOREST	1945	40
RIO SCHOOL FOREST	1952	40
WISCONSIN DELLS MEMORIAL SCHOOL FOREST ANNEX	1959	70
CAMBRIA HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1952	20
PARDEEVILLE MEMORIAL SCHOOL FOREST	1952	40
PORTAGE HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1950	4
<u>CRAWFORD COUNTY</u>		
NORTH CRAWFORD HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1949	10
O. A. SHERWOOD MEMORIAL FOREST	1987	13
PRAIRIE DU CHIEN SCHOOL FOREST	1952	26

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>DANE COUNTY</u>		
JACKSON SCHOOL FOREST	1959	360
NORMAN VETHE SCHOOL FOREST	1960	57
SHEEHAN PARK COMMUNITY FOREST (PROVISIONAL)	1986	75
CAMBRIDGE FFA SCHOOL FOREST	1993	23
<u>DODGE COUNTY</u>		
DODGELAND NATURE CENTER/SCHOOL FOREST	1984	22
<u>DOOR COUNTY</u>		
SOUTHERN DOOR HIGH FOREST	1960	60
APPLEPORT SCHOOL FOREST	1949	60
PIONEER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE	1968	72
<u>DOUGLAS COUNTY</u>		
TOWN OF WASCOTT FOREST	1985	177
GORDON COMMUNITY FOREST	1984	2208
ROCKMOUNT SCHOOL FOREST	1935	57
SUPERIOR MUNICIPAL FOREST	1951	4780
NORTHWESTERN HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1950	160
BONG MEMORIAL SCHOOL FOREST	1948	160
OLON SPRINGS COMMUNITY FOREST	1966	25
OLON SPRINGS SCHOOL FOREST	1936	80
SUPERIOR SCHOOL FOREST AND OUTDOOR LABORATORY	1932	720
SUPERIOR STATE COLLEGE FOREST	1952	70
<u>DUNN COUNTY</u>		
COLFAX SCHOOL FOREST NO.2	1950	80
BJORNSON EDUCATION-RECREATION CENTER	1978	443
BOYCEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1956	20
DUNN COUNTY ISLAND FOREST RESERVE	1944	1511
DUNN COUNTY FOREST (OTTER CREEK)	1954	40
<u>EAU CLAIRE COUNTY</u>		
WILSON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL FOREST	1947	80
TOWN OF UNION YOUTH FOREST	1950	79
MONDOVI HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1958	30
BRUNSWICK SCHOOL FOREST	1956	25
FAIRCHILD TOWNSHIP SCHOOL FOREST	1947	40
FALL CREEK SCHOOL FOREST	1951	80
LUDINGTON TOWN FOREST	1946	160
CITY WELL FIELD FOREST	1962	290
<u>FLORENCE COUNTY</u>		
FLORENCE SCHOOL FOREST	1952	80
FLORENCE SCHOOL FOREST	1952	40
<u>FOREST COUNTY</u>		
LAONA SCHOOL FOREST	1927	63
CRANDON SCHOOL FOREST	1927	10
WABENO SCHOOL FOREST	1927	40

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>GRANT COUNTY</u>		
ST. CLARA CONVENT FOREST	1976	557
SKEETS MILLARD VALLEY SCHOOL FOREST	1981	137
<u>GREEN COUNTY</u>		
BRODHEAD FOREST RESERVE	1943	20
PLEASANT VIEW PARK	1986	22
<u>GREEN LAKE COUNTY</u>		
ROGERS PIONEER FAMILY MEMORIAL [MARKESAN SCHOOL FOREST]	1958	76
BERLIN SCHOOL FOREST	1962	12
PRINSYLVANIA NO. TWO (JT SCH DIST NO. 2)	1961	100
BERLIN SCHOOL FOREST (JT SCH DIST NO. 1)	1954	20
LAWSON WOODS	?	120
<u>IOWA COUNTY</u>		
RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL FOREST - ARENA UNIT	1931	185
NORMAL BASSETT BOY SCOUT WILDERNESS CAMP	1979	85
DODGEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL ARBORETUM	1979	22
<u>IRON COUNTY</u>		
HURLEY SCHOOL FOREST	1955	120
SPRINGSTEAD COMMUNITY FOREST	1955	80
OMA COMMUNITY FOREST	1953	80
MERCER SCHOOL FOREST	1962	40
ST. MARYS SCHOOL FOREST	1956	40
ST. MARYS CONGREGATION HURLEY	1956	40
<u>JACKSON COUNTY</u>		
TOMAH HIGH FOREST	1950	78
B.R. FALLS OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER	1967	40
MELROSE - MINDORO SCHOOL FOREST	1972	52
WHITEHALL MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1952	77
TAYLOR SCHOOL FOREST	1955	3
<u>JEFFERSON COUNTY</u>		
WATERLOO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS FOREST	1957	17
<u>JUNEAU COUNTY</u>		
ELROY-KENDALL-WILTON SCHOOL FOREST	1946	80
NECEDAH PUBLIC SCHOOL FOREST	1950	40
WONEWOC-CENTER SCHOOL FOREST	1958	140
LEMONWEIR-MAUSTON SCHOOL FOREST	1936	20
MAUSTON SCHOOL FOREST	1939	97
NEW LISBON SCHOOL FOREST	1945	40
JUNEAU COUNTY COMMUNITY FOREST	1952	7389
<u>KENOSHA COUNTY</u>		
KENOSHA SCHOOL FOREST	1961	129

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>KEWAUNEE COUNTY</u>		
DANA KEWAUNEE COUNTY COUNTY SCHOOL FOREST	1953	20
MAHLON E MOEDE MEMORIAL FOREST	1968	5
JOSEPH H. KOSS MEMORIAL FOREST	1957	10
<u>LA CROSSE COUNTY</u>		
LA CROSSE COUNTY FOREST RESERVE (incl. HOETH FOREST)	1945	405
LA CROSSE COUNTY FOREST RESERVE	1930	351
LA CROSSE COUNTY FOREST RESERVE	1986	109
<u>LAFAYETTE COUNTY</u>		
DARLINGTON SCHOOL FOREST	1975	4
BLACKHAWK COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOREST	1970	14
<u>LANGLADE COUNTY</u>		
PECK TOWN FOREST	1948	2360
ANTIGO CITY FOREST	1943	65
SCHOOL PARK FOREST	1951	6
NEVA TOWNSHIP FOREST	1950	360
PEACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL FOREST	1955	40
ELCHO JOINT SCHOOL DIST. NO. 1 (See Oneida County)	1937	110
ANTIGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	--	485
<u>LINCOLN COUNTY</u>		
MERRILL MEMORIAL FOREST	1944	960
TOMAHAWK SCHOOL FOREST	1946	520
N. P. EVJUE MEMORIAL FOREST- MERRILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1945	732
TRINITY SCHOOL FOREST	1953	80
TRIPOLI GRADE SCHOOL FOREST	?	80
<u>MANITOWOC COUNTY</u>		
RAHR MEMORIAL SCHOOL FOREST	1955	85
RAHR MEMORIAL SCHOOL FOREST	1955	171
<u>MARATHON COUNTY</u>		
WAUSAU SCHOOL FOREST - BERLIN UNIT	1962	40
WELL SITE PARK	1942	40
EDGAR SCHOOL FOREST	1951	80
ATHENS SCHOOL FOREST	1948	40
MARATHON HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1951	80
WAUSAU SR. HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1942	431
MOSINEE SCHOOL FOREST - LLOYD ASH UNIT	1944	78
ATHENS VILLAGE FOREST	1948	270
WAUSAU SCHOOL FOREST - JOHN MUIR UNIT	1952	62
SPENCER SCHOOL FOREST	1946	47
EVEREST SCHOOL FOREST	1952	81
EVEREST EAU CLAIRE RIVER NATURE CENTER	1967	48
EVEREST SCHOOL FOREST	1965	40
MOSINEE SCHOOL FOREST - KNOWLTON	1972	40
WAUSAU SCHOOL FOREST - HORACE MANN UNIT	1944	80
CENTRAL WISCONSIN LUTHERAN BIBLE CAMP FOREST	1942	142
COUNTY COMMUNITY FOREST	1946	40
IRAPPE RIVER DELLS PARK	1966	40

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>MARINETTE COUNTY</u>		
GOODMAN SCHOOL FOREST - GREEN FUTURE UNIT	1984	26
MARINETTE SCHOOL FOREST	1959	289
BEAVER 4-H FOREST	1933	9
COLEMAN SCHOOL FOREST - BEAVER NO. 2 UNIT	1937	53
COLEMAN SCHOOL FOREST	1948	160
WAUSAUKEE SCHOOL FOREST - MIDDLE INLET UNIT	1956	43
WAUSAUKEE SCHOOL FOREST - ATHELSTANE UNIT	1951	40
WAUSAUKEE SCHOOL FOREST - PIKE RIVER UNIT	1939	40
WAUSAUKEE SCHOOL FOREST - CEDARVILLE UNIT	1947	78
CRIVITZ SCHOOL FOREST - LOOMIS UNIT	1947	44
CRIVITZ SCHOOL FOREST - KONSTED UNIT	1952	40
CRIVITZ SCHOOL FOREST No. 2	1948	80
CRIVITZ SCHOOL FOREST - FERNWOOD UNIT	1952	80
NIAGARA SCHOOL FOREST NO. 2	1966	30
LAKE NOCQUEBAY SCHOOL FOREST (UW-MARINETTE CENTER)	1931	40
CRIVITZ SCHOOL FOREST NO. 1	1931	40
PESHTIGO SCHOOL FOREST	1958	39
CRIVITZ SCHOOL FOREST-SHANE BROOK UNIT	1935	40
CRIVITZ SCHOOL FOREST - BROOKDALE UNIT	1933	40
PEMBINE SCHOOL FOREST - MERRYMAN UNIT	1940	40
GOODMAN SCHOOL FOREST - COMPANY UNIT	1933	41
PEMBINE SCHOOL FOREST - SMEESTER UNIT	1935	38
PEMBINE SCHOOL FOREST - COLES UNIT	1939	40
PEMBINE SCHOOL FOREST - DIXON UNIT	1940	32
PEMBINE SCHOOL FOREST - KEDGER UNIT	1933	80
WAUSAUKEE SCHOOL FOREST	1939	80
AMBERG VETERANS MEMORIAL FOREST	1937	40
PEMBINE SCHOOL FOREST - PEMBINE UNIT	1932	35
MARINETTE COUNTY HOMEMAKERS FOREST	1951	77
EQUITY CLUB FOREST	1956	15
NIAGARA SCHOOL FOREST UNIT - NO. 1	1952	68
GOODMAN SCHOOL FOREST UNIT - NO. 1	1928	7
<u>MARQUETTE COUNTY</u>		
PRINSYLVANIA NO. ONE (JT SCH DIST NO. 2)	1955	200
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL FOREST	1959	200
WESTFIELD UFHS	1953	40
HUNGRY HILLS [MONTELLO]	1950	80
ST. JOHNS LUTHERAN SCHOOL FOREST	1960	13
FOREST LANE [MONTELLO]	1937	20
MUIRLAND SCHOOL FOREST IMONTELLO]	1951	40
PINE LAKE CAMP FOREST	1948	350
<u>MILWAUKEE COUNTY</u>		
MILTON C. POTTER SCHOOL FOREST	1947	51
<u>MONROE COUNTY</u>		
SPARTA HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1948	80
MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY FOREST	1952	260
TOMAH AREA SCHOOL FOREST	1958	65
WEST SALEM SCHOOL FOREST	1958	160
WARRENS SCOUT FOREST	1947	10
TRI CREEK WATERSHED FOREST	1981	592

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>OCONTO COUNTY</u>		
GILLETT SCHOOL FOREST	1935	80
FAIRVIEW SCHOOL FOREST	1973	10
OCONTO FALLS SCHOOL FOREST	1961	40
LENA PUBLIC SCHOOL FOREST	1966	25
SURING SCHOOL FOREST	1939	160
CITY OF OCONTO FALLS FOREST	1993	20
<u>ONEIDA COUNTY</u>		
ENTERPRISE SCHOOL FOREST	1946	80
ARBOR VITAE - WOODRUFF SCHOOL FOREST	1943	22
RHINELANDER K-12 DISTRICT SCHOOL FOREST	1932	1239
THREE LAKES-SUGAR CAMP JT. DIST. SCHOOL FORESTS	1938	200
TRIPOLI SCHOOL FOREST	1948	80
TOWN OF MINOCQUA COMMUNITY FOREST	1985	140
M-H-LT SCHOOL FOREST	1985	40
MINOCQUA SCHOOL FOREST	1946	40
ELCHO JOINT SCHOOL DIST. NO. 1 (See Langlade County)	--	286
<u>OUTAGAMIE COUNTY</u>		
FALLEN TIMBERS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER	1975	445
1000 ISLANDS CONSERVANCY ZONE	1986	275
<u>PIERCE COUNTY</u>		
RIVER FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOREST	1947	51
CAIRNS-ELLSWORTH DEMONSTRATION FOREST (CAIRNS UNIT)	1949	34
ELMWOOD AREA SCHOOL FOREST	1953	11
CAIRNS-ELLSWORTH DEMONSTRATION FOREST (ELLSWORTH UNIT)	1947	22
<u>POLK COUNTY</u>		
STERLING FOREST	1937	4200
INDIAN CREEK SCHOOL FOREST (FREDERIC SCHOOLS)	1954	76
LUCK SCHOOL FOREST	1934	80
FREDERIC SCHOOL FOREST	1943	80
OSCEOLA AREA SCHOOLS FOREST	1958	80
POLK COUNTY 4-H FOREST NO. 1	1961	40
POLK COUNTY 4-H FOREST NO. 2	1961	80
<u>PORTAGE COUNTY</u>		
ALMOND-BANCROFT SCHOOL FOREST	1977	74
GRANT SCHOOL FOREST	1956	13
ROSHOLT SCHOOL FOREST	1946	11
ALMOND HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1947	19
TOMORROW RIVER SCHOOL FOREST	1955	60
HALLIDAY SCHOOL FOREST	1939	40
BELMONT TOWN FOREST	1940	80
CARRIE J. FROST MEMORIAL FOREST	1939	100
H. D. BOSTON MEMORIAL FOREST (PACELLI HIGH SCHOOL)	1937	16
H. D. BOSTON MEMORIAL FOREST (STEVENS PT. AREA SCHOOLS)	1937	44
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE MEMORIAL FOREST	1946	149
PORTAGE COUNTY FOREST	1954	320

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>PRICE COUNTY</u>		
CATAWBA SCHOOL FOREST	1945	40
KENNAN SCHOOL FOREST	1941	80
TOWN OF KNOX FOREST	1947	80
PRENTICE SCHOOL FOREST	1935	80
FIFIELD SCHOOL FOREST	1933	60
KERR SLASHING SCHOOL FOREST	1944	20
PHILLIPS HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1934	200
LYMANTOWN SCHOOL FOREST	1943	40
PARK FALLS SCHOOL FOREST	1943	400
LUGERVILLE SCHOOL FOREST	1944	60
HARMONY SCHOOL FOREST	1940	40
EMERY SCHOOL FOREST	1947	40
SPIRIT SCHOOL FOREST	1946	80
BRANTWOOD SCHOOL FOREST	1941	40
JUMP RIVER-WILDWOOD SCHOOL FOREST	1948	40
KAISER SCHOOL FOREST	1939	40
WORCESTER SCHOOL FOREST	1948	40
LITTLE CHICAGO 4-H CLUB FOREST	1942	40
<u>RACINE COUNTY</u>		
WILMOT UNION HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1964	160
BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1964	160
<u>RICHLAND COUNTY</u>		
RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL FOREST LONE ROCK UNIT	1944	13
ASH CREEK PROPERTY (RICHLAND COUNTY)	1991	241
<u>ROCK COUNTY</u>		
BLACKHAWK TECHNICAL INSTITUTE SCHOOL FOREST	1983	30
ROCK COUNTY COMMUNITY FOREST	1984	320
TURTLE CREEK FLOOD PLAIN	1977	253
JANESVILLE SCHOOLS OUTDOOR LABORATORY	1986	105
BELOIT SCHOOL FOREST	1980	28
JANESVILLE GREENBELT	1987	199

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>RUSK COUNTY</u>		
ATLANTA TOWN FOREST	1946	360
WALRATH SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
GLEN FLORA GRADE SCHOOL FORESTS	?	40
CLOVERLEAF SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
CEDAR BROOK SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
WOODLAND SCHOOL FOREST	1934	40
PLEASANT RIDGE SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
WEYERHAUSER SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
FRONTIER SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
LADYSMITH FUTURE FARMER FOREST	1956	40
POPLAR GROVE SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
LADYSMITH HIGH SCHOOL MEMORIAL FOREST	1936	700
HARDING SCHOOL FOREST	1958	40
LONE PINE SCHOOL FOREST	1932	40
SOFT MAPLE SCHOOL FOREST	1964	40
TONY GRADED SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
TONY HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
GLENDALE SCHOOL FOREST	1963	40
HAWKINS HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
HAWKINS GRADE SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
TRAILS END 4-H FOREST	1958	86
RUSK COUNTY COMMUNITY FOREST	1960	116
LINDEN SCHOOL FOREST	?	40
SUNNYSIDE SCHOOL FOREST	?	15
<u>ST. CROIX COUNTY</u>		
ST. CROIX YOUTH FOREST NO.1	1950	40
BALDWIN MEMORIAL FOREST	1947	27
HUDSON COMMUNITY FOREST	1959	30
ST CROIX YOUTH FOREST NO.2	1958	80
ST. CROIX CENTRAL SCHOOL FOREST	1958	14
<u>SAUK COUNTY</u>		
BARABOO COMMUNITY FOREST	1943	38
BLACK HAWK SCHOOL FOREST	1958	6
REEDSBURG SCHOOL FOREST	1938	80
WESTON UNION HIGH SCHOOL	1959	63
RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL FOREST SPRING GREEN UNIT	1942	18
SAUK COUNTY COMMUNITY FOREST	1955	685
<u>SAWYER COUNTY</u>		
HAYWARD COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - LENROOT	1961	40
OJIBWA SCHOOL FOREST	1931	120
<u>SHAWANO COUNTY</u>		
SHAWANO SCHOOL FORESTS	1940	38
HI-WOOD SCHOOL FOREST	1957	80
TIGERTON HIGH SCHOOL FUTURE FOREST	1951	40
MATTOON PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOREST	1959	38
GRESHAM FFA REFORESTATION PROJECT	1953	40
BOWLER SCHOOL FOREST	1952	80

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>SHEBOYGAN COUNTY</u>		
ELKHART LAKE SCHOOL FOREST	1985	14
<u>TAYLOR COUNTY</u>		
TAFT-THORP SCHOOL FOREST	1937	40
GILMAN SCHOOL FOREST NO.2	1937	40
MEDFORD-KIWANIS SCHOOL DISTRICT FOREST	1952	160
GILMAN SCHOOL FOREST NO.3	1960	40
GILMAN SCHOOL FOREST NO.1 (FORMERLY GILMAN NO. 5)	1937	80
HANNIBAL SCHOOL FOREST	1938	6
GILMAN SCHOOL FOREST NO.4	1937	40
LUBLIN SCHOOL FOREST	1937	50
RIB LAKE SCHOOL FOREST	1952	210
GREEN GROVE 4-H CLUB FOREST	1952	80
STETSONVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOREST	1995	27
TOWN OF ROOSEVELT	1996	40
<u>TREMPEALEAU COUNTY</u>		
GALE-ETTRICK-TREMPEALEAU SCHOOL FOREST-GALE UNIT	1967	80
OSSEO SCHOOL FOREST	1951	138
TREMPEALEAU SCHOOL FOREST	1950	20
MEMORIAL FOREST (OUR SAVIOUR'S MEN'S BROTHERHOOD)	1943	6
<u>VERNON COUNTY</u>		
DESOTO HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1952	40
VIOLA SCHOOL FOREST	1944	15
<u>VILAS COUNTY</u>		
LAKELAND UNION HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1985	40
PHELPS SCHOOL FOREST	1936	40
PRESQUE ISLE FOREST	1948	2051
EAGLE RIVER GRADED SCHOOL FOREST	1936	80
TOWN OF WASHINGTON MEMORIAL FOREST	1944	1080
FLAMBEAU GRADED SCHOOL FOREST	1955	40
LAND O' LAKES SCHOOL FOREST	1936	40
EAGLE RIVER HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1936	60
CLOVERLAND SCHOOL FOREST	1936	40
IRISH WOODS	1972	100
LAC DU FLAMBEAU TOWNSHIP FOREST	1990	101
<u>WALWORTH COUNTY</u>		
ST. MARY'S AND ST. CHARLES SCHOOL FOREST	1987	39
<u>WASHBURN COUNTY</u>		
MINONG SCHOOL FOREST	1939	40
EARL NAMEKAGON FOREST	1976	95
HAYWARD COMMUNITY SCHOOL (STINNET)	1961	20
SHELL LAKE SCHOOL FOREST	1937	94
LOST LAKE FOREST	1971	200
CHICOG COMMUNITY FOREST	1959	200

<u>County & Forest Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>
<u>WAUKESHA COUNTY</u>		
WILLOWOOD COMMUNITY FOREST	1989	44
<u>WAUPACA COUNTY</u>		
WEGA HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1969	20
NEW LONDON FUTURE FARMER SCHOOL FOREST	1957	78
NEW LONDON FUTURE FARMER SCHOOL FOREST	1948	80
WAUPACA SCHOOL FOREST	1952	20
CLINTONVILLE SCHOOL OUTDOOR LAB	1964	75
IOLA SCHOOL FOREST	1958	8
WAUPACA COUNTY FOREST	1939	200
<u>WAUSHARA COUNTY</u>		
COLOMA MUNICIPAL FOREST	1948	80
TRI COUNTY SCHOOLS FOREST	1968	230
WILD ROSE SCHOOL FOREST	1950	139
ROSE TOWNSHIP FOREST	1942	435
COLOMA GRADE SCHOOL FOREST	1954	43
PLAINFIELD LEGION FOREST	1930	60
WAU-BUN FOREST	1955	80
TWIN LAKES RESERVATION	1957	280
GRAND VIEW TREE FARM	1958	80
MORAVIAN YOUTH CAMP	1965	80
<u>WINNEBAGO COUNTY</u>		
OMRO SCHOOL DISTRICT FOREST	1966	6
<u>WOOD COUNTY</u>		
NEKOOSA SCHOOL FOREST	1998	53
MID-STATE VTAE DISTRICT FOREST	1979	70
AUBURNDALE SCHOOL FOREST	1979	123
WISCONSIN RAPIDS SCHOOL & WATER DEPT. FOREST	1945	252
WISCONSIN RAPIDS WATER & LIGHT COMMISSION COMMUNITY FOREST	1993	253
JOHN EDWARDS SCHOOL FOREST	1949	31
ALEXANDER HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1949	32
MARSHFIELD SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL FOREST	1956	320
NEKOOSA CITY FOREST	1944	74
CHILDRENS CHOICE SCHOOL FOREST	1955	4

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WFREA

Wisconsin Forest
Resources Education
Alliance

April 2001

Greetings:

The Wisconsin Forest Resources Education Alliance (WFREA) worked with several partners to develop a manual titled *How to Grow a School Forest*. This is the first Wis. handbook for educators ever established to aid in adapting school forests into working outdoor classrooms. The Wis. Environmental Education Board (WEEB) provided funding to distribute a copy to the curriculum coordinator in each of the 426 school districts in Wisconsin. Trees for Tomorrow, Nicolet Distance Education Network (NDEN), and the Wis. Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) will provide a manual to each teacher attending their respective school forest workshops. To further aid in the marketing and distribution of the manual, WFREA has incorporated it on its web site as a downloadable pdf file for educators.

WFREA also developed a series of three five-minute vignettes about Wis. school forests, sustainable forestry, and woodlot management, which air on the statewide Public Broadcasting System (PBS) network. Approximately 510,000 viewers are reached each month via these broadcasts. WFREA wrote a grant to the International Paper Foundation for funding to stream these vignettes onto its web site for better accessibility by educators to utilize at school board meetings and other events to gather support for their respective school forests and associated issues.

WFREA invites you to attend a meeting about Wisconsin's school forests; this meeting will take place in Stevens Point, Wis. The agenda for the day is enclosed, and the goal is to determine where we are with the Wisconsin school forest system; where we want it to go; and how we get there. **Please check your calendars and let me know when you are available in June. You can e-mail your responses to me at wfrea@newnorth.net.** I will choose the date the majority of people can attend and follow-up with you on the date and location.

Enclosed are school forest related materials, which will be discussed at the meeting. If you need further assistance, please contact me toll-free at (888) WFREA-64, or send me an e-mail. Hope to see you there.

Sincerely,

Eden Koljord

Enclosures

School Forest Meeting

Tuesday, June 5th from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Schmeekle Reserve, Stevens Point, Wis.
Donuts, Coffee, and Lunch provided

List of Participants:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| ○ Sally Ellingboe | Boston School Forest at Stevens Point, Wis. |
| ○ Genny Fannucchi | Wis. DNR |
| ○ Patrick Furey | Colfax High School |
| ○ Teri Heyer | USDA Forest Service – SNPF |
| ○ Amy Kay Kerber | Minn. DNR School Forest Program Coordinator |
| ○ Sherry Klosiewski | Wis. DNR |
| ○ Eden Koljord | Wis. Forest Resources Ed. Alliance (WFREA) |
| ○ Larry Mancl | Tri-County School Forest at Plainfield, Wis. |
| ○ Michele Nickels | Nicolet Distance Education Network (NDEN) |
| ○ Gail Gilson-Pierce | Trees for Tomorrow |
| ○ Joe Panci | Trees for Tomorrow |
| ○ Al Stenstrup | Wis. DNR |
| ○ Dennis Yockers | Wis. Center for Env. Education (WCEE) |
| - Dave Daniels | |

AGENDA

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.
9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Coffee and donuts
Welcome and Introductions
Amy Kay Kerber

- Minn. School Forest Program Overview

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Break
Genny Fannucchi

- Wis. School Forest Program Overview
- School Forest Survey Overview

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Eden Koljord

- Wis. School Forest Manual
- Wis. School Forest Newsletter

Gail Gilson-Pierce/Dennis Yockers/Michele Nickels

- Panel Discussion
 - Trees for Tomorrow School Forest Workshop
 - NDEN School Forest Workshop

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Lunch
Discussion:

- Where are we with the Wis. school forest system?
- Where do we want it to go?
- How do we get it there?

2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m.

Break
Continue discussion
Adjourn

Forestry Issue Brief Title: School Forests in Wisconsin

Authors: Genny Fannucchi - Forest Resource Education and Awareness Specialist, Forestry Program, WDNR; Sherry Klosiewski - Northern Region Educator, Bureau of Communications & Education, WDNR; Eden Koljord - Wisconsin Forest Resources Education Alliance (WFREA), Forestry Education Coordinator

Date Written: June 2001

Date to be presented: 7-8 August 2001

Issue Statement: Although Wisconsin is fortunate to have hundreds of school forests around the state, no formal system exists to assist in improving and maintaining these valuable educational resources. This issue brief highlights several key issues and suggests future initiatives regarding Wisconsin's school forests. These issues were identified at a meeting attended by: Sally Ellingboe, School Forest Coordinator, Boston School Forest, Stevens Point; Genny Fannucchi, WDNR, Madison; Patrick Furey, Teacher, Colfax High School, Colfax; Teri Heyer, Natural Resource Conservation Education Program Coordinator, State & Private Forestry, US-Forest Service, St. Paul, MN; Amy Kay Kerber, School Forest Program Coordinator, Minnesota DNR; Sherry Klosiewski, WDNR, Rhinelander; Eden Koljord, WFREA, Rhinelander; Larry Mancl, School Forest Coordinator, Tri-County School Forest, Plainfield; Michele Nickels, Coordinator, Nicolet Distance Education Network (NDEN), Rhinelander; Gail Gilson-Pierce, Assistant Director, Trees for Tomorrow, Eagle River; Joe Panci, Trees for Tomorrow, Eagle River; Al Stenstrup, Education Outreach Coordinator, WDNR, Madison; Dennis Yockers, Associate Professor, Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE), UW-Stevens Point. Invited individuals that were unavailable: Dean Gagnon, Agriculture Education Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Madison; Mark Rickenbach, UW-EX, UW-Madison - Department of Forestry. The authors would like to share the combined thoughts, concerns and proposed alternatives of the ad hoc school forest committee listed above with the Forestry Policy Team (FPT) and gain their support for future initiatives.

Background: Wisconsin is home to more than 400 school or community forests, scattered throughout 67 counties and encompassing over 67,000 acres. These school forests fill a variety of niches in their communities and school districts - from frequently used outdoor classrooms, to recreational sites, to under-utilized or unrecognized land holdings. Although originally intended to demonstrate timber management, facilitate replanting of Wisconsin's forests, and generate income for municipalities, many of Wisconsin's community/school forests have evolved to become valuable educational resources within their communities. School forests can help students, teachers and community members better understand concepts like forest management, resource stewardship and ecosystem management. All of Wisconsin's school forests have the potential to be valuable outdoor classrooms for their associated school districts. Our state is consistently recognized as a national leader in environmental and outdoor education, and these school forests can play a vital role in continuing and building upon our successful efforts in the field of environmental education. For example: Since 1990, a state mandate has required Wisconsin school districts to integrate environmental education into K-12 curriculum plans, with major emphasis on science, social studies, art, and health. Teachers who have become certified since 1990 (i.e. early childhood, elementary, middle, and secondary teachers in the subjects of science,

social studies, and agriculture) must meet seven competencies in environmental education. In 1998, model academic standards were enacted for English/language arts, mathematics, and social studies; minimum performance standards were written for grades four, eight, and twelve. School forests can help address these academic needs if they are functioning at optimum levels.

Impact of Issue: By developing and implementing a statewide system for coordinating our school forests, we can help these outdoor classrooms provide a variety of benefits to Wisconsin's citizens. School forests can be valuable hands-on resources to teach students about the importance of forests, forestry, and forest products in Wisconsin. Urban students, in particular, can benefit greatly by learning in an outdoor environment that links trees to urban forestry. In addition, learning on school forests can be tied to the state academic standards, a linkage that can assist teachers in addressing these standards. Further, school forests can link teachers with forest resource professionals. These professionals have the knowledge and background to competently convey scientific and credible information about sustainable forestry. And, they can create demonstration plots on school forests to teach forest management to school and community audiences.

Current Status: With declining budgets and increasing emphasis on meeting state academic standards, many school districts are abandoning their traditional field trips and outdoor learning experiences for students. To provide outdoor educational opportunities in subject areas like science, social studies and environmental education, some districts are beginning to reexamine their school forest programs. On a statewide level, the Division of Forestry has recently begun to work with the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE) to develop a comprehensive Wisconsin K-12 Forestry Education Program. The development of this new curriculum also offers the opportunity to promote the use of school forests and integrate outdoor school forest activities with the classroom components of the program. Recognizing the importance of school forests as educational resources, the Department of Natural Resources, in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WDPI), the University of Wisconsin Extension (UW-EX) and the US-Forest Service undertook a survey of Wisconsin's school forest coordinators in 1999. A few highlights from this survey follow: School forests in Wisconsin come in a variety of sizes, with over one quarter being larger than 120 acres. Only 48% of school forest coordinators reported that their school forest had a written school forest management plan. When asked what kind of assistance would improve the teaching and learning experience at their school forest, 65% said additional training for teaching outdoors. Seventy-eight percent of school forest coordinators reported that they had ever worked with a professional resource manager on their school forest. Clearly, school forest coordinators have identified several areas of need related to their programs, including forest management planning, teacher training and consultation with resource professionals. How do these coordinators and other educators find information to help them meet these needs? Currently, numerous groups work with Wisconsin's school forests. Trees for Tomorrow and the Nicolet Distance Education Network (NDEN) provide teachers with school forest workshops. WFREA, along with several partners, developed a manual entitled How to Grow a School Forest that will be utilized at these workshops. Lumberjack Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council publishes a quarterly School Forest Newsletter. The Department of Forest Ecology, UW-Madison Department of Forestry, maintains the current listing of registered school and community forests, and final approval for registering a

school forest is done in joint consultation between the UW-Extension Forester and the DNR. For educators to maximize the resources available to enhance their school forests, which are in different stages of development, they need to become familiar with all of these various groups and the services they provide. There is no central point of contact and no unified way to provide for identified needs. This is not an efficient way to assist educators in growing their school forests. Thus, a critical need exists to have a formalized school forest system.

Alternatives: Implement a formalized Wisconsin school forest system endorsed by both the Department of Natural Resources and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. This system should include a full-time school forest statewide coordinator and the creation of a formal system for incorporating school forest-related responsibilities (management consultation, educational outreach, teacher training and academic standards etc.) into selected agency staff position descriptions (i.e. field foresters, basin educators, and other natural resource professionals). Continue the current approach to Wisconsin's school forests. Do not implement a formalized statewide school forest system.

Recommendations: The authors request the Forest Policy Team to support Alternative 1 and provide advice and eventual consensus on options and procedures for designing a formalized school forest system for Wisconsin.

Implementation: Please let us know what your thoughts are here.

Thank you.

General Information Concerning the School and Community Forest Law (section 28.20, Wis. Stats.)

The School and Community Forest Law, enacted in 1947, allows schools, villages, cities and towns to own land and practice forestry. The original intent of the Law was to demonstrate the economic advantages of managing timber and to allow municipalities to receive an income from these lands.

Over the years, forestry and forestry education has changed. Lands entered under the Law provide an excellent opportunity to demonstrate, not only the economics of forestry, but also the overall concepts of forest management and land stewardship.

Who Is Eligible To Apply? Any city, village, town or school district.

What Is Permitted Under the Law? Allows municipalities to acquire land, engage in forestry and appropriate funds for this purpose.

What Are the Benefits? Upon registration with the Department of Natural Resources the municipality is eligible (1) for free trees from the state forest nurseries and (2) technical assistance by Department foresters in carrying out tree planting and forest management plans.

Timber Sales. No trees may be cut unless they are marked or designated for cutting by a state forester. All sales must be based on the scale, measure or count of products and sales over \$250 in value must be by public notice (class 2) and public sale. Income is paid into the municipalities treasury and may be used for any legal purpose. Products from the forest may be used for improvement of the public lands or other public use.

How To Apply. Submit a completed application to the DNR forester in your county or the DNR in Madison. Application forms and information are available from the UW-Extension Forester, any DNR office or County Extension Office. Assistance in completing the application is available from the DNR forester serving the county in which the lands are located.

What Happens After the Application Is Filed? The application is reviewed by the DNR Forester for eligibility. Applications that do not meet the requirements will be returned with an explanation. Applications that appear to meet the spirit of the Law and the minimum criteria will be processed for entry.

The DNR forester will meet with the manager of the land to discuss the municipalities program for management. The forester will look at the land and prepare a report and map of the vegetation and condition of the land. Forester assistance is also available in the preparation of the forest management plan for the property.

The forester sends the completed report and map, along with a recommendation for entry or rejection, to the UW-Extension Forester who, with the assistance of the DNR Private Forestry Specialist, will make a final decision on acceptance.

Acceptance is based on the requirement of the Law and the established criteria for entry.

What Are the Criteria For Entry?

1. The lands must be under the control of the municipality through deed, lease or contract.
2. Lands should normally be a minimum of ten contiguous acres dedicated to forestry and be at least an average width of 120 feet.
3. Eighty percent of the lands should be stocked with productive forest types (20% of the area may be in marsh, swamp, brush open field, roads, water, etc.).

Exception: Areas not meeting the 80% stocking requirement may be conditionally entered if there is a written plan to meet the requirement by planting trees. At the end of one year, the owner must have shown substantial progress toward meeting the stocking requirement for the land to be continued under the program.

4. The owner must indicate the intention of the municipality to maintain the lands to demonstrate good forest and land management. A management plan must be completed in cooperation with (or approved by) the DNR Forester within one year of the approval date.

For more information contact your local DNR Forester or Extension office, or:

Extension Forester
University of Wisconsin
126 Russell Labs
1630 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706
(608-263-0134)

Private Forestry Specialist
DNR
Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707
(608-266-2289)

Name of Property

Street or Route Name of Person to Contact

City, State, Zip Code Telephone Number (Include Area Code)

In what name is title to property recorded?

If owner is not a governmental unit, do articles of incorporation authorize the ownership of property? Yes No

Date Property Officially Designated by Municipality for Forest Purposes

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

County Legal Description

1/4-1/4 _____ Section _____ Town _____ Range _____

Total Acreage Wooded Acreage Acreage Requiring Reforestation

Is there a forest management plan for the property? Yes No

When was plan prepared or last revision?

The undersigned hereby apply for registration of their community forest with the Department of Natural Resources.

Signature of Applicant Signature of Applicant

Title Title

Date Signed Date Signed

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE-DNR USE ONLY

FORESTER'S REPORT

Percent Nonproductive Forest Acceptance Recommended?

Supplemental Information Yes No

Signature of Forester Date Signed

DNR BUREAU OF FORESTRY

Approved Rejected By Date Signed

UW EXTENSION FORESTER

Approved Rejected By Date Signed