



Sustainable Forest Resources Act: Minnesota's Doing Things Better

In 1995 the Minnesota Legislature adopted the Minnesota Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA), one of the state's most significant forestry laws, which has since been reauthorized through 2007. The act established policies and programs to ensure sustainable use and management of our state's forests. Sustainability means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable forestry is a proactive form of management that provides for the multiple uses of the forest by balancing a diversity of both present and future needs.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE SFRA INCLUDE:

- ◆ **Forest Resources Council.** This is a 17-member, governor-appointed body whose responsibility is to coordinate SFRA implementation and serve as an advisory group to government and land management organizations on sustainable forest resource policies and practices. Members represent a range of public and private organizations including research and higher education, conservation and environmental groups, tourism, labor organizations, hunting interests, and forest products.
- ◆ **Comprehensive timber harvesting and forest management guidelines.** These guidelines are a menu of valuable decision-making tools, that include recommendations for riparian forest management, forest wildlife habitat, soil productivity, historic and cultural resource protection, water quality, and visual quality.
- ◆ **Monitoring practices and conditions.** The SFRA directs the Department of Natural Resources to carry out a program to evaluate the extent to which the timber harvesting and forest management guidelines recommended by the Forest Resources Council are achieving their intended objectives.
- ◆ **Landscape-level forest resource planning and coordination.** This is a way of assessing the impact of forest management activities across large forested areas. It's a forum where forest landowners and stakeholders can collaborate to address forest resource issues over broad regions of Minnesota's forests, enabling long-range forest resources planning across land ownerships and forest types.
- ◆ **Forest resources research.** The Forest Resources Council has prepared an assessment of important forest resources research needs and is sponsoring research to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative forest management practices on forest riparian areas, wildlife habitat and soil productivity.
- ◆ **Continuing education.** Timber harvesters created the Minnesota Logger Education Program as a means to promote high operation standards and enhance professionalism within the timber harvesting community. Also, a partnership was created between the MN Forest Resources Council, MN Association of County Land Commissioners, MN Department of Natural Resources, MN Land Management Information Center, University of MN, and the U.S. Forest Service to enhance the access and use of forest resources data.

For more information, visit the Forest Resources Council Web site at www.frc.state.mn.us



This guidebook is a statewide effort to address the impact of forest management practices on natural resources.