

Forestry Working Group 2-year Work Plan

Date: May 1, 2015

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Purpose

This work plan is designed to outline the goals, projects, and products of the WICCI Forestry Working Group. From our perspective, this is a “wish list” to document our vision for what could optimistically be achieved by the Forestry Working Group by December 2016. This 20-month timeframe will keep our work focused on near-term, concrete objectives rather than long-term goals. Our primary target audience is forestry and natural resources professionals. Our intent is to focus mostly on information transfer regarding climate change and adaptation, and to help our audience put this information into practice.

Using the Work Plan

The accomplishments of the Forestry Working Group will be determined by our Members. Following approval of this Work Plan, the “Core Team” (the authors of this Work Plan) will reach out to a larger network of interested professionals and educators in the forestry community to see who might be interested to join our Working Group. We’ll ask all interested Members to sign up for 1-3 projects outlined in this Work Plan, and small Project Teams will be responsible for pursuing the various projects during the next 20 months. Core Team members will participate in Project Teams and help with communication and collaboration between members, and host monthly or bi-monthly calls to keep everything moving forward. Our Working Group will be flexible, and this Work Plan can be amended based on future needs or interest.

Projects

New projects may be added to this list, and Working Group Members and the WICCI Science Advisory Board can help us prioritize these ideas. Many of the projects listed below are on-going and will continue beyond December 2016.

(1) Project: Forest ecosystem vulnerability assessment and synthesis for northern Wisconsin and western Upper Michigan

Description: The Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science recently published a forest ecosystem vulnerability assessment, focusing on forests in [northern Wisconsin and the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan](#). Over 40 managers and researchers contributed to the report, from a range of federal, state, tribal, non-profit, academic, and private organizations. Companion assessments in northern Minnesota and Michigan were released earlier this year, so forest managers and landowners across the Northwoods region have access to the best available information on observed and projected impacts of climate change on forest ecosystems. This assessment was built with several sources of information: observed and projected climate data, new forest impact models, published literature, and local manager expertise.

Intended date of completion: The assessment was published in September 2014.

Outcome: The goal of this project was to provide a comprehensive assessment for professional forest managers and interested landowners. The document provides the best available science on climate and forests in our region, and can serve as a launching pad for more detailed assessments and adaptation planning.

Links: <http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/46393>

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(2) Project: Adaptation and Forest Management in Wisconsin: a flexible workbook approach and real-world examples

Description: The Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science (NIACS) is providing resources and assistance to help forest managers and landowners develop custom, place-based adaptation plans. [Forest Adaptation Resources: climate change tools and approaches for land managers](#) contains a flexible workbook process to guide users through a series of key considerations, as well as a “menu” of possible adaptation actions for forest management. The process is designed to help translate broad-scale information on climate vulnerabilities to project-specific concerns, and to help managers figure out how they can continue to meet their own unique management goals through adaptation. NIACS has been working with organizations and landowners in Wisconsin for the past three years to develop a network of real-world [adaptation demonstration projects](#), to showcase how different people are using the Adaptation Workbook for a variety of different projects. This network will provide crucial examples for the forestry community and help people learn from their neighbors. NIACS has also created an [online version of the Workbook](#) for forestry and natural resource professionals.

Intended date of completion: The FAR document was published in 2012, and a revised version is being drafted. The online version of the Adaptation Workbook was launched in March 2015. The network of adaptation demonstrations will continue to grow through time.

Outcome: The goal of this project was to provide a useful process to help forest managers and landowners figure out how climate change impacts and adaptation might relate to their own management goals and objectives. Forest Adaptation Resources and the Adaptation Workbook were designed to be flexible enough to accommodate a variety of project types, ownerships, and management goals.

Links: http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr_nrs87.pdf

<http://forestadaptation.org/demonstration-projects>

www.AdaptationWorkbook.org

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(3) Project: Integrating climate change adaptation into internal Wisconsin DNR processes

Description: The Wisconsin DNR is responsible for a wide range of activities that directly or indirectly influence forest management on state and private land. There may be opportunities to integrate climate change adaptation information and strategies **into risk assessment and management planning** for some of these activities. For example, the Wisconsin Silviculture Guidance Team (SGT) is charged with revising The WDNR Silviculture Handbook. Cover-type chapter revisions would be a good opportunity to include non-binding information on expected climate change impacts, site-level considerations, and possible adaptation actions. Other opportunities to review and foster forest management adaptation strategies may include:

- a. WDNR Timber Sale Notices and Cutting Reports
- b. Managed Forest Law Plans
- c. Restoration and conservation programs
- d. WFLGP (Wisconsin Forest Landowners Grant Program) – cost share for adaptation projects
- e. Stewardship Plan templates
- f. Forestry Education Leadership Team – a 12-person team led by Kris Tiles

Intended date of completion: The WDNR Silviculture Handbook cover type chapters are revised on a rolling basis. Chapters covering The Swamp Hardwood and Red Maple Cover Types have been recently completed while Jack Pine and Bottomland Hardwoods are currently being revised. Other opportunities listed above are also infrequently reviewed so we will pursue this task whenever the opportunity arises.

Outcome: Including climate change information in these programs and activities will help ensure that the WDNR is providing up-to-date information to practicing foresters and interested landowners, and will help ensure that decision making and funding processes start to incorporate climate change adaptation.

Links: Several

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(4) Project: Pocket field guides on forest management and climate change

Description: We imagine that a small, visually interesting pocket guide on adaptation and forest management would be a useful product for foresters and land managers. One example of this sort of guide is Vermont's "Forestry for the Birds" guide:

<http://vt.audubon.org/sites/default/files/documents/bird-guide.pdf>.

Intended date of completion: December 2016.

Outcome: An easy-to-read and convenient guides will help ensure that foresters and land managers have up-to-date information, and will help ensure that this information gets translated into real-world management actions.

Links: <http://vt.audubon.org/sites/default/files/documents/bird-guide.pdf>

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(5) Project: Education and outreach throughout the forest management community

Description: The forestry community in Wisconsin is large and diverse, and our Working Group wants to interact with any and all interested audiences. We are developing a growing list of forest management professional organizations and interest groups, and Working Group Members will help us connect with each of these groups. Our goal is to deliver information and help interested parties start incorporating climate change adaptation into their work. The partial list of interested parties may include:

- i. Wisconsin Society of American Foresters
- ii. Forest Guild
- iii. Wisconsin Council on Forestry
- iv. Wisconsin Association of Consulting Foresters
- v. Wisconsin Conservation Congress
- vi. WDNR Cooperating Foresters/ Certified Plan writers
- vii. Two Chiefs' Partnership Landscape Restoration Program in Lake Superior Watershed
- viii. Wisconsin Deer Management Assistance Program
- ix. Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership

- x. Internal DNR staff
- xi. Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association
- xii. FISTA (Forest Industry Safety Training Alliance)
- xiii. Wisconsin County Forest Association
- xiv. Logging Congress
- xv. Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association
- xvi. American Tree Farm System
- xvii. Woodland Leader Institute
- xviii. Master Woodland Stewards
- xix. Driftless Forest Network
- xx. Nature Centers
- xxi. National Forest staff
- xxii. Land Trusts

Intended date of completion: Our goal is to interact with each of these groups at least once by December 2016.

Outcome: Our goal is that the majority of the forestry community in Wisconsin will have at least heard an introduction to climate change that is practical and relevant to their interests as foresters and land managers. This will help combat widespread misinformation, and we will prioritize face-to-face settings where people can absorb and discuss this information with their peers.

Links: Several

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(6) Project: Forest Adaptation Planning and Practices workshops

Description: The Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science (NIACS) has designed an adaptation workshop to help forest managers and landowners develop custom, place-based adaptation plans. These workshops are called “Forest Adaptation Planning and Practices,” and they follow the process outlined in [Forest Adaptation Resources: climate change tools and approaches for land managers](#). Participants bring their own real-world forest management projects, and through the course of the workshop they develop their own customized set of adaptation actions that will help meet their unique management goals.

Intended date of completion: We intend to host one workshop in Wisconsin in 2015 and one in 2016.

Outcome: The individual projects that are developed through these FAPP workshops will contribute to the growing network of real-world [adaptation demonstration projects](#), and they will showcase how different people are using the Adaptation Workbook for a variety of different projects.

Links: http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr_nrs87.pdf

<http://forestadaptation.org/fapp>

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(7) Project: Climate change information and forest inventory software

Description: We think it would be useful to try and integrate information about climate change vulnerabilities or opportunities into standard forest inventory software. There are a variety of software platforms currently used within the forestry community, and we will try to partner with relevant experts and build off of previous experiences to create a useful application.

Intended date of completion: December 2016.

Outcome: This would allow foresters to generate useful reports and analyses using inventory data that they already collect, and would make the thought process of climate change adaptation more quantifiable. Using similar metrics on repeated inventories through time would allow foresters and managers to monitor their progress toward particular climate change adaptation goals.

Links: <http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/tools/ned/products/ned3/>

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