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Community-Owned Forests: Possibilities,
Experiences, and Lessons Learned (June 16-19)

2005

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SLIDES: Wisconsin County Forests

Neil Paulson

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WISCONSIN COUNTY FORESTS

June 16, 2005

Neil Paulson

OBJECTIVES

- Know the historic, current, and future issues related to the establishment and management of Wisconsin County Forests
- Know what the local readiness was to establish County Forests and what it takes to continue them.
- Know that establishing and maintaining a forest requires long term local commitment

HISTORIC ISSUES

- Good timber and ready markets
- No timber
- Tax delinquent lands



THE FIX

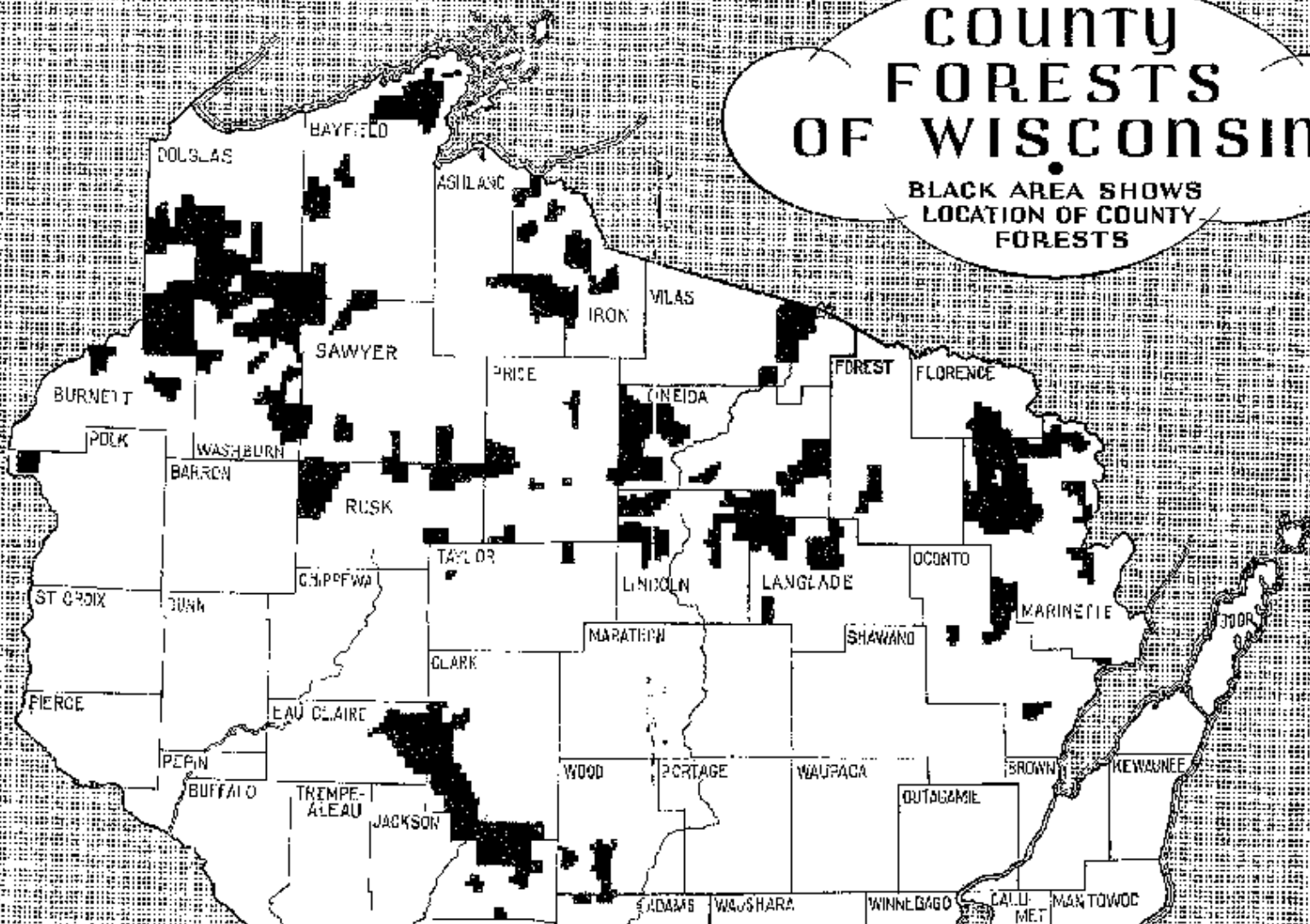
- Legislation allowing establishment of County Forests.
- Revenue to Counties to fund rebuilding the forests.
- Taxes on harvested timber to repay the State.

FOREST ESTABLISHMENT

- Langlade County was first. Nov 6, 1928
 - » 89,539 acres
- By end of 1935 – 25 forests
 - » 1,749,647 acres
- Now have 29 forests
 - » 2,300,000 acres

COUNTY FORESTS OF WISCONSIN

BLACK AREA SHOWS
LOCATION OF COUNTY
FORESTS



Many County Forests Established
before the Chequamegon /
Nicolet National Forest, which
currently is 1.5 Million Acres



EARLY MANAGEMENT

- Local guys interested in forests.
- Non-professional in most instances
- Poor Inventories
- No Consistent Planning
- Lots of DNR assistance had some pro's

Was Wisconsin Ready for Community Forests- YES!!!

So Ready, they also agreed to forming the
Chequamegon / Nicolet National Forest in
the mid 1930's.

LAND ACQUISITION EARLY

- Early easy. County owned tax delinquent lands.
- County Board of Supervisors evaluated lands and proclaimed forest boundaries.
 - Value for forestry or other purposes.
 - Block up lands to simplify management.

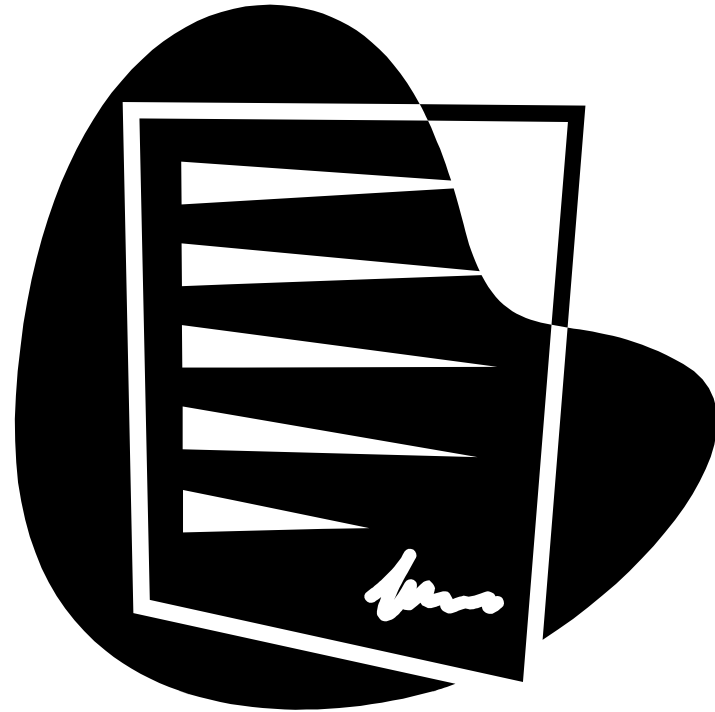
LAND ACQUISITION NOW

- Purchase
 - We budget \$150,000 per year.
 - Can get zero interest state loan and repay from timber harvest.
- Exchange
- More complex now. Multiple interests, higher land values, keep it private.

CURRENT AND FUTURE PUSH

- Eleven (11) counties with National Forest passed resolutions to have lands returned to Counties.

WHY?



REVENUES / JOBS

2004

- County Forests \$ 21.1 million
- National Forests \$ 5.0 million

SALE FLOW 2000-2004

- All County sales sold on time, no appeals.
- National Forests:

<u>No. Sales</u>	<u>Appealed</u>	<u>Volume Replaced</u>	<u>Litigated</u>
10	10	2	4

Result: Few widely scattered sporadic sales.

FINANCING / REVENUES

- Cost \$500,000 per year
- Most from timber receipts
- Balance: Grants, Habitat Programs, Miscellaneous Receipts
- \$2,500,000 Revenue in 2004

MANAGEMENT

- 10-Year Management Plans
- DNR oversight of whole program
- Staff:
 - 5 Professionals
 - 1 Technician
 - 1 Business Manager



DNR OVERSIGHT

- Management Plan Template and Approval
- Liaison Forester for Each County
- Periodic Reviews
- Major Daily Decisions by the County

OUR CORE

- Satisfying Local Social, Environmental, and Economic Needs.
- Reducing Tax Levy with Outputs
- Creating Local Tax Bases-
Timber/Recreation

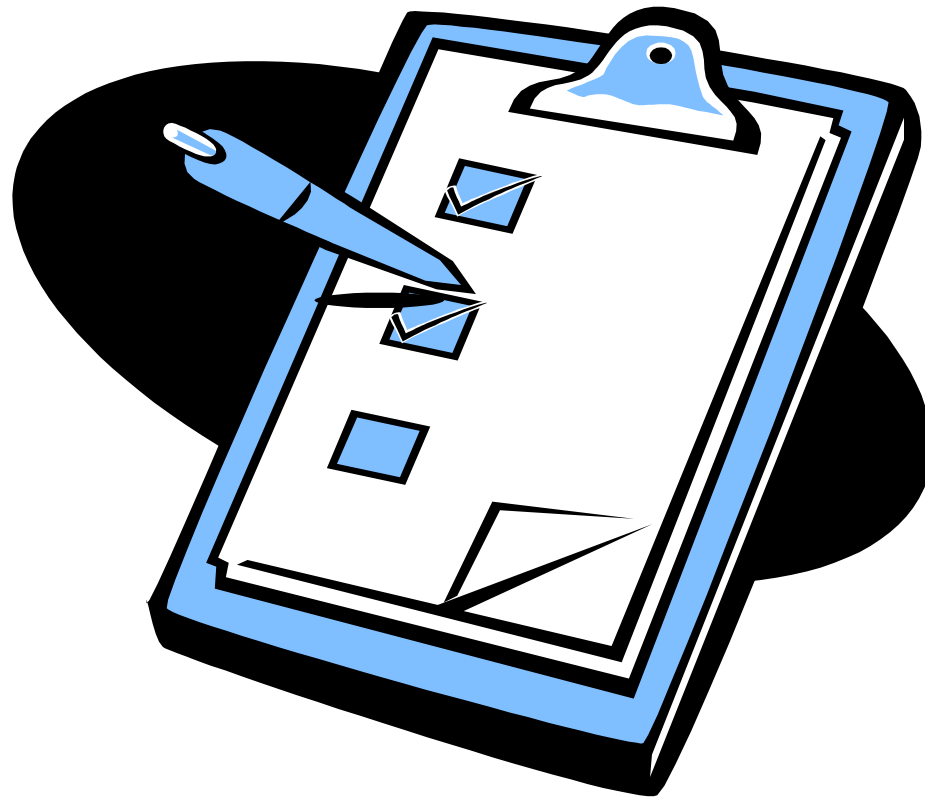
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OUR CORE (cont)

- Professionally Managed Organization that works hard.
- Strong Technical Support that keeps getting better. (Professional, software, computer capacity, training)

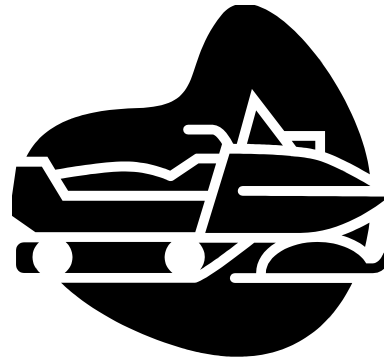
BRAND NEW CORE

CERTIFICATION !!!

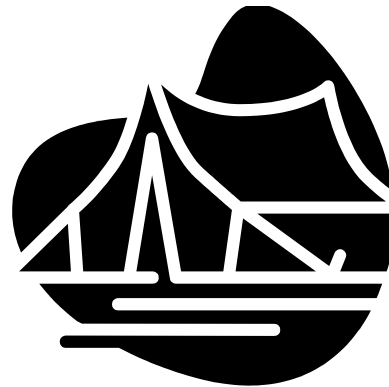


CHALLENGES

- Managing for Multiple Use with Increasing Public uses of Forests.



- Large Acreage of Public Lands (50%)



CHALLENGES (cont)

- Ensuring that we keep getting better at our job. Technically and making \$ investments.
- Informing the County Board and the Public.

NEEDS

- Maintain a strong Wisconsin County Forest Association.
 - Information
 - Education
 - Protection of Forestry Interests
 - Legislation

NEEDS (cont)

- Better Management Plans
- Better DNR Technical Services
- Better Outreach to the Public Especially via the Media.

THANK YOU FOR THE
OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT
WITH YOU