

LINCOLN COUNTY FORESTRY, LAND AND PARKS DEPARTMENT

To the Honorable Board of Supervisors
Lincoln County, Wisconsin

The following is a report of the various activities of the Lincoln County Forestry, Land and Parks Department from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008.

OUR 2008 COUNTY FOREST consists of 100,845.05 acres.

2008 TIMBER SALES REVENUE TOTALED \$1,692,287.46. This revenue is distributed as follows: \$169,228.75 (10%) to Towns with County Forest Lands; \$338,457.49 (20%) to the County General Fund; and \$1,184,601.22 (70%) to the County Forestry Fund.

DURING THE YEAR, 24 TIMBER SALES WERE SOLD with an estimated value of \$1,005,035.50.

TWENTY-ONE BOUGH PERMITS WERE ISSUED @ \$100.00 per permit = \$2,100.00.

GRANT REVENUES administered by the Forestry, Land & Parks Department during 2008 totaled \$158,031.30. \$34,111.00 of this \$158,031.30 was provided by Lincoln County for those grants requiring 50/50 cost share.

REVENUE FROM WOOD SALES AND FIREWOOD PERMITS DURING 2008 TOTALED \$3,180.00. Eleven wood sales (\$1,280.00) and one hundred forty-two 30-day permits (\$1,420.00) were issued. Forty-eight permits (\$480.00) were extended.

TREE PLANTING/SITE PREP: The forestry field crew hand planted approximately 15,000 2-year old red pine seedlings on 15 acres along Honey Road in the town of Wilson. This site was an 18 acre red pine stand that had been clear-cut. The red pine was whole tree skid with the tops piled on the landing by the logging contractor. A biomass harvest was conducted on the site to utilize the slash and logging residue and was used to fuel a local paper mill boiler. The forestry crew used a bulldozer and v-blade to further prepare the site for planting. The 3 remaining acres will be planted in 2009.

Approximately 42 acres of swamp conifer were clear cut with slash bunched, as a requirement of the timber sale contract, to prepare the site for natural seeding.

Approximately 58 acres of white birch seed tree harvesting was done with whole tree skidding during leaf off conditions, as a requirement of the timber sale contract, to prepare the site for natural seeding.

Approximately 4 acres of red maple seed tree harvesting was done with whole tree skidding during leaf off conditions, as a requirement of the timber sale contract, to prepare the site for natural seeding.

Approximately 15 acres of jack pine was whole tree skid and the slash piled as a requirement of the timber sale contract. A biomass harvest was conducted on the site to utilize the slash and logging residue and was used to fuel a local paper mill boiler. Due to the amount of dead trees on this site, the remaining slash was brush raked and burned by the LCF crew.

TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENT (TSI): Approximately 15.5 acres of white spruce in the Town of Wilson were mechanically released by the Forestry Department work crew. Approximately 9 acres of red pine were released from aspen through the application of herbicide by the LCF crew. Approximately 10 acres of jack pine were mechanically released from aspen by DNR crew. Approximately 5 acres of white spruce were mechanically released by DNR crew. Approximately 1,068 acres of aspen release was completed in aspen regeneration areas by contractors as a requirement of timber sale contracts.

SURVEYING: The majority of surveying done in 2008 was in conjunction with the Lincoln County Surveyor. In Section 14 of T35N-R4E steel, T-style fence posts were placed at various points along County Forest property boundary for the north line of the SW1/4 totaling approximately 1/2 mile of boundary. In Section 6 of T34N-R5E steel, T-style fence posts were placed at various points along County Forest property boundary for the south line of the NE1/4 totaling approximately 1/2 mile of boundary. A monument was set at the E1/4 in Section 6. In Section 13 of T34N-R4E steel, T-style fence posts were placed at various points along County Forest property boundary for the SW1/4 NW1/4 totaling approximately 1/2 mile of boundary. In Section 35 of T34N-R4E steel, T-style fence posts were placed at various points along County Forest property boundary for the south section line and for the east line of the SE1/4 SE1/4 totaling approximately 1 1/4 mile of boundary. A monument was set at the E1/16SE and a monument was reset at the SE in Section 35. In Section 31 of T33N-R5E steel, T-style fence posts were placed at various points along County Forest property boundary for the south line of the SW1/4 totaling approximately 1/2 mile of boundary. In Section 12 of T35N-R8E T-style fence posts were placed at various points along County Forest property boundary for the NE1/4 NW1/4 totaling approximately 1/4 mile of boundary. In Section 13 of T34N-R7E T-style fence posts were placed at various points along County Forest property boundary for the NE1/4 NE1/4 totaling approximately 1 mile of boundary. Monuments were set at the N1/16NE, C1/16NE, and the E1/16NE. In Section 18 of T34N-R8E T-style fence posts were placed at various points along County Forest property boundary for the NW1/4 SW1/4 totaling approximately 3/4 mile of boundary. A monument was set at the CW1/16. In Section 20 of T35N-R4E steel, T-style fence posts were placed at various points along the County Forest property boundary between the NW 1/4 and the N 1/16 NW.

CONTINUED OUR COUNTY FOREST ROAD MAINTENANCE program including graveling, installing culverts, improving drainage, and regular grading and snowplowing of roads.

THE COUNTY FOREST ROAD AIDS PROGRAM: In 2008 we received \$336/mile for maintaining 27.25 miles of roads for a total of \$9,156.00.

COUNTY CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE HABITAT FUNDS FOR 2008: We continued work on our County Conservation Aids grant for improving lake access by improving the Doering Lake boat landing as well as completing renovation work on eight wildlife openings. Wildlife Habitat funds were used for hunter/walking trail improvements and expansions, wild rice planting on flowages, green cover release, hiring a summer intern to assist with wildlife opening maintenance and renovation and mowing of wildlife openings and trails.

THE UNDERDOWN RECREATION AREA is available for a variety of uses year round. Groomed and tracked X-C ski trails, snowshoe trails, horse trails, bike trails, hiking trails, and a snowmobile/winter ATV trail are all mapped and signed in the Underdown. Season trail passes were made available to the public to offset the cost of these trails. A grant from the state and the Wisconsin Horse Council was utilized to expand and improve the parking lot at the trail head.

ICE AGE TRAIL: Several sections of the Ice Age Trail were relocated and/or reconstructed. The major work was completed in the New Wood area.

ORGANIZED AND/OR COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES WERE CONDUCTED on the County Forest in the Underdown Recreation Area by the Underdown Horse Club and the Wisconsin Off Road Bike Association (WORBA).

COUNTY PARKS ACTIVITIES: Regular maintenance of County parks and facilities was performed during 2008. A new restroom/changing house facility was completed, the old unit was removed, electrical service was improved and the parking lot was resurfaced at Tug Lake Park using grant dollars. Improvements were made to the well in the Otter Lake Campground. The enclosed multi-use building in the Harrison South ATV parking lot was furnished with picnic tables and shelves.

INVASIVE SPECIES: In 2007, a significant garlic mustard infestation was discovered in the Underdown Block of the County Forest and on adjacent private land. Our department took immediate action to try to control the spread of this invasive plant by conducting a search to find new infestations and applying herbicide where the plant was known to occur. Several other small, satellite colonies of this invasive plant have been found in other locations of the Underdown and Harrison Block. In 2008, a two-year sustainable forestry grant was obtained from the state to cover the associated costs of controlling invasive species on the County Forest which included the hiring of a contract herbicide applicator to spray the identified garlic mustard sites. We continue to treat known locations with herbicide, monitor roads and trails for new sites and educate adjacent property owners and user groups about invasive species in an attempt to control this problem on the County Forest.

LINCOLN COUNTY ACCESS PLAN: We began road and landing improvements for access to Doering Lake. An access road was completed into the County Forest south of Hwy. 8 in the Town of Bradley. We continue to work on acquiring access permits for private individuals that access their lands through the County Forest. Issued temporary access permits for individuals hauling forest products from private lands across the County Forest. A Recreation Officer continued working on the County Forest and helped reduce vandalism and restore order to our public lands and recreational facilities.

LINCOLN COUNTY'S 2008-2009 SNOWMOBILE TRAIL MAINTENANCE PROJECT was approved for \$78,350.00 consisting of 313.4 miles of trail @ \$250/mile. Six clubs contracted to maintain 260.6 miles of trail and our department maintains 52.8 miles. The final 8.5 mile connection on the trail between Merrill and Tomahawk along the Highway 51 ROW was completed and state maintenance funding for this trail segment was also acquired.

ATV PROGRAM: We received trail maintenance aids of \$19,754.00 consisting of 195.95 miles of winter trails @ \$100/mile and \$20,015.00 consisting of 44.4 miles of summer trails at \$450/mile maintained by our department. Five clubs contracted to maintain 152.75 miles of winter trail and our department maintained 43.2 miles. The winter trails are part of our snowmobile trail system, while the summer mileage traverses through the Harrison Hills and links up with Langlade and Oneida County ATV Trails and the communities of Gleason, Harrison, and the Pine Lake area. We received a \$6,000.00 grant for the printing of new maps for the summer trail system. We also received a \$28,500.00 grant to construct a pit toilet building at the Harrison Hills ATV trailhead on County Hwy B along with various parking lot improvements. This work is scheduled for 2009. We completed renovation work on the connector trail from our summer ATV system to the Village of Gleason and also on other areas of the funded summer trail. Worked with ATV clubs in Somo, Wilson and Spirit Falls area to identify possible sites for an ATV trail/route link and supported the opening of a section of CTH CC to ATV traffic. Explored development of a new trail north of Pine Lake in Harrison. Lincoln County also participated in the Light-Utility Vehicle pilot program.

LAND SOLD, RATIFIED, CONFIRMED AND APPROVED by the Lincoln County Board in 2008 included 3 tax deed parcels that were sold for a total of \$3,782.93.

BEAVER PROGRAM: Continued to work with USDA APHIS regarding beaver problems on the Lincoln County Forest and on the county road system.

FOREST CERTIFICATION: The Lincoln County Forest became SFI certified in March, 2005 and FSC certified in July, 2007. We worked on implementing necessary changes on the County Forest required by SFI and FSC forest certification.

DEPARTMENT SAFETY PLAN: Continued development and implementation of our department safety plan. The Lincoln County Public Works Safety Group (Highway, Forestry, Solid Waste and Maintenance Departments) are under contract with Alpha Terra Science to develop a safety plan. Programs are in place for hazardous communication, control of hazardous energy, confined space entry and excavation safety, emergency action and fire prevention plan, personal protective equipment, occupational noise exposure and bloodborne pathogens. Alpha Terra has set up a webpage for the user groups above to manage and maintain safety records.

DNR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT: 2008 Accomplishments on the Lincoln County Forest submitted by Rick Weide, Wildlife Biologist:

Flowages – Water levels were monitored and managed as needed on Camp 26, Trapper Morrison, and Coffee Creek flowages. Approximately 200 pounds of rice were seeded along the north end of the Harrison Flowage to supplement and expand existing beds. This followed 150 pounds seeded in 2007. The bed on the southeast side of the flowage was the best in recent years, consisting of about 8 acres of good, medium-density rice. As time permits, additional monitoring will be conducted in 2009 to reevaluate management potential/options.

Wildlife Openings – Openings maintenance focused on the Harrison block in 2008. Dry weather combined with rolling topography facilitated equipment access by late spring. A total of 116 openings were mowed by late July. Eight of these were only partially mowed due to sparse and degraded cover. The parts of these openings that lacked significant grass and other preferred herbaceous cover were later renovated using a Howard rotovator. Most of the openings that become candidates for renovation were identified in a 2007 intern study. GPS and other data collected in 2007 have proved to be very useful for planning and record-keeping related to the opening program.

Wildlife Surveys – 2008 surveys on the Lincoln County Forest included woodcock, ruffed grouse and turkey including spring breeding activity as well as later brood counts, bear bait survey, summer deer observations (fawn: doe ratio), furbearer, and waterfowl. A final survey in 2008 that included parts of the County Forest was disease surveillance of the northern deer herd. Priorities included testing for chronic wasting disease and tuberculosis. Results are expected in the spring of 2009.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASES IN 2008: There were no equipment purchases made in 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Kleinschmidt,
Forest Administrator