



Minnesota Forestry Association

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

Winter 2024

MINNESOTA Woodlands

MFA: an organization of, by and for Minnesota's private woodland owners and friends.

Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA)

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MFA Newsletter Vol. 26 No. 1 Winter 2024

The Minnesota Woodlands newsletter is published by the Minnesota Forestry Association.

MFA Board Meetings Conference Calls

8 – 9 am

- January 9, 2024
- February 13, 2024
- March 12, 2024
- April 9, 2024

Away from home for a time? Please contact the MFA office if you'll be away from home for an extended time and let us know when you'll be back. We'll hold onto the newsletter until you return so you won't miss a single issue! Email info@minnesotaforestry.org or call 218-879-5100.

Forest of Points

By Jennifer Corcoran - Remote Sensing Program Consultant and Keb Guralski - Statewide Forest Inventory Coordinator, DNR Resource Assessment

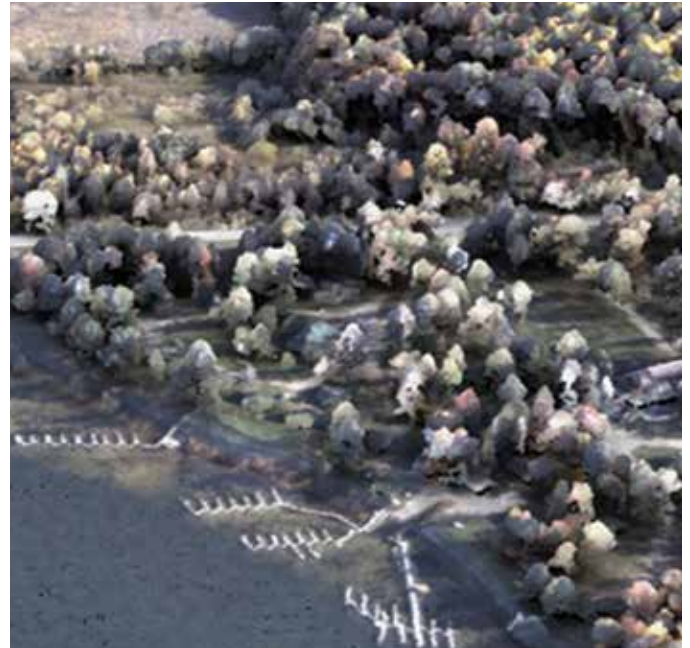
Forest inventory plays a crucial role in good forest management. For example, in the last MFA Newsletter, readers learned that knowing your fire fuel load means having good forest inventory. Brian Huberty's article explained how these datasets can provide critical information to help wildland firefighters and provides foundational information for land managers and planners working at the site-to-landscape scale. Minnesota's legislature agrees with the importance of forest inventory data and has provided substantial funding to enhance forest inventory in Minnesota. This is part of the ~\$4 million investment in private forest land management that Doug Tillma (strategic planning and policy section manager with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources - MN DNR) recently summarized for MFA.

Traditionally, MN DNR has inventoried about 120,000 acres per year, out of approximately 3.7 million acres of state administered forest land. Conducting this forest inventory means visiting each forested 'stand' with boots on the ground. It takes nearly 20 years to visit every stand with these traditional methods. No comprehensive inventory exists for Minnesota's private woodlands.

To address this information gap, the MN DNR Resource Assessment Program (RAP) is developing a lidar (light detection and ranging) based forest inventory using Plot Based Inventory (PBI) across Minnesota. A pilot project funded by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) tested this new methodology and provided Minnesota with a preview of the quality and kinds of forest inventory data that will soon be available statewide. Continued funding from the State of Minnesota and ENRTF, amongst other partners, will help to drastically reduce the turnaround time and overall cost of forest inventory, while dramatically increasing the amount and kinds of information provided.

Lidar is a technology that uses active pulses of light to estimate the distance from a sensor to an object of interest. The amount of time it takes for the signal to reach, and then reflect off an object and travel back to the sensor (at the speed of light) is used to calculate the location and elevation of the features scanned.

Continued on page 2



A photo taken around the same time as lidar point cloud provides incredible detail! The information shown in this example can be summarized in many different ways to help landowners and professionals manage the forest.

Minnesota Forestry Association

2023 Board of Directors

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Forest Stewardship continued

For example, a lidar camera in an airplane can scan across the landscape providing a detailed representation of the ground and everything above it. In a forest, the laser pulses hit treetops, travel through canopy gaps, sometimes hitting the ground or scattering. The reflected laser pulses return to the sensor, providing a cloud of points mapping the position and elevation of things on the Earth's surface.

Lidar derived forest inventory models combine the lidar derived information with a network of forest inventory plots called Plot Based Inventory (PBI). Since lidar is flown "wall to wall," forest inventory models can be made across "all lands" throughout the state. This information can be summarized for any area and used for all sorts of decision-making purposes – like forest stewardship!

Now, to one of the most important messages of this article: More plots on private woodlands are needed to increase

the precision and accuracy of these new forest inventory models and maps. The fieldwork needs to be representative of all forested conditions to produce the best models across entire landscapes. Until now, PBI has been collected primarily on public lands. Expanding PBI to private woodlands will provide valuable information to increase the accuracy of forest inventory models statewide.

By enrolling in the PBI program, select landowners will voluntarily agree to have forest inventory plot data collected by a professional forester on their land. Importantly, there are no other obligations.

Consider having a plot measured on your land and volunteer today! MFA members have already taken the first step toward land stewardship by their involvement and interest in forest management. Here's another step you can take!

Please visit the RAP website (mndnr.gov/resource-assessment) to access the enrollment portal. You can request assistance enrolling or receive additional resources through entering your information in the portal. You can also access more information about PBI Data Collection, including field manuals, tutorial videos, news stories and more!

Questions? Email MFA at info@minnesotaforestry.org or MN DNR Resource Assessment at ForestInventory.dnr@state.mn.us

How does it work?

- Landowner volunteers to have a PBI plot collected on their property. Landowners can enroll or request assistance enrolling through the enrollment portal on the Resource Assessment Program (RAP) website (mndnr.gov/resource-assessment) or by contacting info@minnesotaforestry.org
- Landowners choosing to enroll, request assistance, or request additional information will be asked to volunteer their contact information (home address, phone, email). Enrollees will be asked basic details about their land, including location of their property or parcel ID(s), size, and forest cover types. This information will be shared with MFA and a local cooperating forestry professional to follow-up with you. Note: enrollment does not guarantee a plot will be collected on your property.
- Landowners selected for a plot will be contacted initially and again prior to plot collection to confirm interest, parcel location as well as to determine timeline for plot collection.
- A professional forester will collect the PBI data by visiting a one tenth acre circular forest plot to count and measure all the trees above 5 inches in diameter.
- Collection of plot data is anticipated to begin in Fall of 2024 and continue into the Summer of 2025.

Which Forestry Incentive Program is Right for Me?

The Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) provides direct incentive payments to property owners to encourage sustainable use of forest lands. Now, as ‘tax season’ comes upon us, visit this page provided by MFA, as well as study

the chart to become better acquainted regarding a ‘best fit’ for you and your woodlands.

<https://www.minnesotaforestry.org/sfia>

Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA)		2c Property Tax Classification Managed Forest Land
Annual payment—rate varies by covenant term	Incentive	Property tax classification lowered to 0.65%
20	Minimum Stewardship Acres	20
No Maximum	Maximum Stewardship Acres	1,920 Acres per Taxpayer
Yes	Contiguous Stewardship Acres?	No, but parcels must be contiguous
3 Acres	Area to be excluded if residence present	10 Acres
8, 20, or 50-year Covenants	Term of Program	Annual Verification
Cannot be enrolled in RIM, CREP, CRP, Green Acres, Agricultural Preserves, or Rural Preserves. Cannot be enrolled in any program funded by Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council or similar easement granted after May 30, 2013	Limitations if Participating in Other Programs	Cannot also be enrolled in SFIA
MN Department of Revenue	How to Enroll	Local County Assessor
Plan must be submitted to DNR by Sept. 15. Enroll with DNR-approved plan by Oct. 31	Deadline to Enroll	Enroll with DNR-approved Plan by May 1
First payment will be the following October	Takes Effect	Will take effect the following tax year
Yes—Covenant is recorded with the property	Program Carryover upon Property Transfer?	No—2c Classification is linked to the owner of the Forest Stewardship Plan
Yes	Taxable Income	No—Tied into property tax classification
Plan valid for 10 years	Forest Stewardship Plan Term	Plan valid for 10 years
2020 SFIA PAYMENT RATES: Covenant Length	Payment Rate (per acre, per year)	
8 Years	Fewer than 1,920 acres enrolled: \$9.40 per acre 1,920 or more acres enrolled: \$13.01 per acre	
20 Years	Fewer than 1,920 acres enrolled: \$13.01 per acre 1,920 or more acres enrolled: \$16.63 per acre	
50 Years	Fewer than 1,920 acres enrolled: \$16.63 per acre 1,920 or more acres enrolled: \$20.24 per acre	

MFA Board Elections 2024

Please review the candidate bios for MFA officer positions. Please take time to vote. Policy change begins at the local level – and nothing is more ‘local’ than your woodlands and the opportunities they provide all citizens. Directions are on Page 5. Note that in addition to the traditional method of voting, you can email your choices to: vote@minnesotaforestry.org.



Stan Grossman, Grand Rapids

Stan has had the distinct pleasure and privilege of serving on the Board of MFA for eight years, and notes it is “truly is amazing to witness the level of dedication that this volunteer board of directors has displayed in fulfilling MFA’s mission!” Stan started Itasca Woodland Services, Inc. and began working as a forestry consultant in 1996, and by the end of 2023 will have written 1000 Stewardship Plans covering over 120,000 acres across northern Minnesota. Nearly 700 of those Stewardship Plans were written in the last 10 years. Itasca Woodland Services has administered over 150 timber sales since 2010. Stan notes he has seen first-hand how the “Call Before You Cut” program that MFA administers has been incredibly helpful to landowners. “I plan to continue promoting that service if reelected.”



Brian Huberty, Coleraine

Brian is a forester and the former lead remote sensing scientist at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Holding both a B.S. and M.S. from the University of Minnesota’s College of Natural Resources, Brian specializes in geospatial resource inventory systems. His career spans over 40 years, during which he has spearheaded the application of cutting-edge remote sensing and geospatial assessment technologies such as mapping at two meter resolution the forest and vegetation surface canopies for the entire Great Lakes Basin including Canada. Brian’s expertise has significantly impacted various organizations, including the University of Minnesota, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, USDA Forest Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and U.S. Geological Survey.



Ryan Rothstein, St. Cloud

Ryan is a wildlife habitat specialist with the Stearns County Soil & Water Conservation District working with private landowners to plan and implement wildlife habitat projects on their land. Ryan has a B.A. in Biology from Minnesota State University Moorhead and M.S. in Range & Wildlife Management from Texas A&M University – Kingsville. Ryan is also a columnist for Outdoor News, with much of his focus devoted to whitetail deer. He is an avid deer hunter, traveling across the state and country each year in pursuit of venison. He recently purchased 40 acres of woodland in central Minnesota, with numerous timber stand improvement projects already being planned. Ryan is the chair of the Governmental Relations Committee for MFA, with a focus on promoting legislation to benefit private woodland owners.



Jennifer Wahls, Winona

Jen grew up in Lake City. Her ecological understanding started under the guidance of her parents. Family outings on the Zumbro River, winter and summer fishing in the backwaters of the Mississippi, annual summer camping trips to northern Minnesota, animal rehabilitation and more was the framework. At the University of Minnesota-Duluth she earned her Bachelor Degree in Biology and Outdoor Education and minors in Geology and Environmental Science. Her career path includes working with the Wabasha County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Prairie Restorations, Inc. until she started her own consulting and service provider business in 2021 contracting with local government units, non-governmental organizations and private landowners in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Jen is an active volunteer member of the Southeast Landscape Committee and the Wabasha Forestry Committee. When not working, she loves to go cross-country skiing and hiking with her husband, Travis, and their dog, George, on their property in East Indian Creek near Kellogg.



Greg Wuerflein, Cambridge

I began my forestry career in Lewiston, with a one-year assignment as a technician. It was there that I was introduced to many of the forestry tools, methods, and practices. After that I found a job on a crew at Perrot State Park in Wisconsin, and then back with the Lewiston office as a laborer in the spring of 1980.

In 1980, I took a job as a technician in Cambridge until 2018. My interest here became pine, as 90 percent of this area has sandy soils. Most of the pine was in plantations on private land, so that is where my work was focused: cost-sharing, thinnings, and planting more pine. Because of the sandy soils and pine, fire was a big deal. I learned quickly that fire didn’t stop at 4:30 pm on Fridays.

I am married with one son, and one daughter and son in-law with a son and daughter of their own. We are members of Common Ground a United Methodist Community. I have been a member of Isanti Lions for 30 years, am on the MFA and East Central Habitat for Humanity boards. We have a 22-acre Tree Farm.

OFFICIAL MFA 2024 BALLOT Directions

- Select a candidate by placing an “X” in the appropriate box. Those with Family Memberships are entitled to TWO votes.
- You may write in the name(s) of any MFA member in good standing.
- Return the ballot by USPS to the MFA using this self-mailer or your own envelope. Mail to the address at right.

Minnesota Forestry Association
 Attn: Election Committee
 PO Box 6060
 Grand Rapids, MN 55744-6060

- **Mail no later than January 31, 2024.** Any ballot postmarked after this date will not be a valid vote.
- OR: Save yourself some postage and email with your selections to: vote@minnesotaforestry.org

Vote for five, each for a three year term on the MFA Board of Directors	First Vote	Second Vote (Family Members)
Stan Grossman, Grand Rapids (incumbent) 3 year term	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brian Huberty, Coleraine (incumbent) 3 year term	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ryan Rothstein, St. Cloud (incumbent) 3 year term	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jennifer Wahls, Winona - 3 year term	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greg Wuerflein, Cambridge (incumbent) 3 year term	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write In:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write In:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For Family Members, please print your name here so we can verify that you are entitled to two votes: _____		

Thank you for voting!

Look for this in the near future!

The MFA will be setting up a member-only login section where members of the Minnesota Forestry Association can login and get a special discount code to order canvas prints and rugs like this one. The creation of the rugs are by a remote sensing firm out of North Dakota that MFA President Brian Huberty helped set up ‘decades ago’ (in his words!). This is a spinoff similar to farmers and other landowners ordering aerial photos of their farm. *(Dog not included!)*



Tape Here

Tape Here

Tape Here

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Return Address (Optional)

Affix a
1st Class
Stamp
Here

TO:

MINNESOTA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
ATTN: ELECTION COMMITTEE
PO BOX 6060
GRAND RAPIDS, MN 55744-6060

Any comments you'd like to add? Put them here and then fold this side in first.

A New 'Regular'

By Kathleen Preece

Being a woodland owner typically means focusing on tree planting and harvesting, timber stand improvements, watch-dogging for invasive species, AND hiking, hunting, and skiing in your forests.

But there are a lot of gatherings that go on 'behind the scenes' of those more tangible activities of forest management—activities that are conducted in conference rooms and offices in towns and cities throughout the state. Those activities are conducted by two organizations that represent all land management and land ownership interests in the state of Minnesota: the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) and Minnesota Forest Resources Partnership (MFRP).

We include the legal language of their respective formations here. But more informally, we want to tell you that they meet independently throughout the year to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing both public and private lands in Minnesota. Both the MFRC and MFRP boards of directors are comprised of nearly all land interests in the state: from tourism to industry, from private to tribal lands.

In future issues of *Minnesota Woodlands*, we will share excerpts and highlights from their respective meetings to keep you apprised of what's going on behind the forest scenes in Minnesota.

Minnesota Forest Resources Partnership:



Statute 89A.04 PARTNERSHIP

It is the policy of the state to encourage forest landowners, forest managers, and loggers to maintain a partnership

in which the implementation of council recommendations can occur in a timely and coordinated manner across ownerships. The partnership shall serve as a forum for discussing operational implementation issues and problem solving related to forest resources management and planning concerns, and be responsive to the recommendations of the council. This partnership shall also actively foster collaboration and coordination among forest managers, landowners, and loggers in addressing landscape-level operations and concerns.

Minnesota Forest Resources Council:



Statute 89A.03 MINNESOTA FOREST RESOURCES COUNCIL

The council must develop recommendations to the governor and to federal, state, county, and local

governments with respect to forest resource policies and practices that result in the sustainable management, use, and protection of the state's forest resources. When making appointments to the council, the governor must appoint knowledgeable individuals with an understanding of state forest resource issues who reflect a balance of the various interests in the sustainable management, use, and protection of the state's forest resources in order to achieve the purpose and policies specified in subdivision 2 and section 89A.02.

What Will Minnesota's Forests Look Like in 2100?

Anthropogenic Climate change (this means, climate change originating in human activity) is driving changes to our forest landscapes. We can and do manipulate forest diversity, composition and structure through management decisions

- What will happen if we can stabilize carbon emissions?
- What will happen if we bring in new industries or develop new products?
- What if carbon sequestration and carbon offsets are the products themselves?

The ForCAST tool attempts to provide forestry professionals and land managers with an opportunity to evaluate how a changing climate and changing markets might affect Minnesota's forests and the ecosystem services that they provide at an area or regional level

There are limitations:

- ForCAST cannot provide land managers with definitive answers about what a management unit will or will not look like at some point in the future.
- Forest Landscape Modeling cannot be expected to accurately depict specific sites or individual stands or how climate change or proposed management activities will affect or impact an individual parcel.

Before using the tool, you will be asked to consent to the following: **Disclaimer:**

- The ForCAST tool was designed to provide land managers with a view to how a changing climate and changing markets for forest products may impact forests, wildlife habitat, and water quantity.
- While this tool may be useful for thinking about how a particular parcel fits into the landscape it is not meant to support decisions at small spatial or temporal scales.

Check it out: <https://mnforecast.org>

Thinking Ahead

Find events and more information at the MFA website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org, or by calling MFA at 218-879-5100.

Celebrating the Avon Hills Conference

January 27 from 8:30-3:45 pm

Saint John's University, 2850 Abbey Plaza, Collegville, MN 56321

A conference for landowners featuring award winning keynote speaker Heather Holm, live raptor presentations, breakout sessions with experts, exhibit hall, and demonstrations and field experiences within the habitat sanctuary of Saint John's Abbey Arboretum just off interstate 94 northwest of St. Cloud.

Registration page coming soon to www.csbsju.edu/outdooru

State Nursery Now Selling Seedlings for the 2024 Spring Planting Season

The Minnesota State Forest Nursery is now selling seedlings for the 2024 spring planting season. Visit the seedling ordering information page to learn about program requirements, payment, and delivery options and a link to the order form. Note that seedling requests are only being taken through the online request form. No email or phone requests are being accepted this year.

You can get help completing or submitting the seedling request form if you call 218-364-8010. Nursery staff can complete the online form and submit it for you.

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/nursery/ordering.html>

MFA Members: this is for you!

Please contact us if your life circumstances have changed: Address? Death? We would like to best serve you by keeping the MFA mailing list current.

Annual Meeting Wrap Up

The MFA Annual Meeting was held on Friday, Sept 15 at the Itasca County Fairgrounds Log House in conjunction with the North Star Logging Expo. Minnesota Tree Farmers also gave out their annual Tree Farmer of the Year awards. Look for more MFA gatherings in the coming years in collaboration with many of our affiliates such as Celebrating the Avon Hills Conference – Saturday January 27, 2024 at Saint John's University in Colleeville, MN.



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MFA's
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A free service for MFA members only!
Call for an appointment with
the forester: 218-879-5100