

Executive Summary – North Shore Area SFRMP (Step 4)

The Subsection Forest Resource Management Plan (SFRMP) 10-Year Stand Selection Results and New Access Needs document: 1) summarizes the results of stand selection; 2) summarizes new access needs resulting from stand selection; 3) identifies substantive changes that have been made to the Strategic Direction Document (Step 3); 4) provides DNR responses to public comments regarding Step 3; and 5) provides the complete list of stands selected to be examined for treatment over the 10-year planning period.

This SFRMP is a plan for vegetation management on state forest lands administered by the DNR divisions of Forestry, Fish and Wildlife, and Trails and Waterways. The North Shore Highlands, Toimi Uplands, and Laurentian Uplands subsections landscape unit is approximately 2.4 million acres. State lands comprise 14 percent (324,000 acres) of the land in the subsections. Of the state lands, 207,000 acres (9 percent of subsection acres) are considered managed timberlands, lands suitable and available for timber production.

Approximately 25 percent (52,500 acres) of the DNR's managed timberland acres in these subsections will be evaluated for treatment during the 10-year period, or approximately 2.5 percent (5,250 acres) per year. This evaluation/treatment level is higher in the first decade of the plan because of the current age-class imbalances (i.e., many acres are beyond the recommended rotation ages) and the large acreage of high-risk, low-volume (HRLV) stands identified in the plan.

Over the 10-year planning period, it is planned that every stand on the stand examination list will be field visited to determine the type of management, if any, to be conducted on it. The range of decisions about each stand's management includes:

1. Appraise the stand for a timber sale.
2. Defer treatment of the stand to a future year.
3. Update the stand's forest inventory data to reflect current conditions without prescribing a management action at this time.
4. Manage for the understory regeneration without harvesting at this time.
5. Prescribe forest development work (e.g., site preparation and tree planting).
6. Prescribe timber stand improvement (tsi) to enhance stand vigor, diversity, or productivity.

The summarization of new access needs identified a potential need for 162 miles of new access in this 3,750-square-mile landscape unit. The preliminary classifications consist of 23 miles of resource management access routes and 139 miles of temporary access routes. Of these, 136 miles are winter access and 26 miles are summer access. Road classification, mileage, and closure method are subject to change when field staff completes the on-the-ground road layout.

Public review in this step of the process is to focus on the proposed 10-year stand examination list and new access needs. Other sections of the draft plan have already gone through a public review and comment period. The DNR has developed comment responses and made plan revisions based on the previous public input.