

# Forestry

## Extending the Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA)

## Revising the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA)



### Why is this legislation needed?

This bill addresses two separate forestry-related statutes by extending the Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA) and revising the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA).

Established in 1995, the SFRA, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 89A, provides a framework for state, local, and private collaboration to assure sustainable management, protection, and balanced use of Minnesota's forest resources to contribute to the state's economic, environmental, and social goals. The SFRA expires on June 30, 2021 and this measure would extend the sunset date to June 30, 2028, commensurate in length with previous extensions.

Under the SFIA, Minnesota Statutes, chapter 290C, DNR certifies lands eligible for incentive payments to keep private forests as forests. Changes are needed to reduce challenges in the SFIA application process.

### Major proposal elements

Extending the SFRA to June 30, 2028 will continue Minnesota's sustainable forestry policies along with the many vital sustainable forestry efforts authorized by SFRA, such as:

- The 17-member Minnesota Forest Resources Council, that recommends sustainable forest policies and practices to federal, state, county, and local governments managing forested lands in Minnesota.
- Sustainable timber harvesting and forest management guidelines, along with a monitoring program.
- A process for engaging the public about timber harvesting and forest management activities across all forestlands.
- The Research Advisory Committee (RAC), which identifies and initiates priority forest resources research activities.
- The Interagency Information Cooperative (IIC) within the University of Minnesota (UMN) to coordinate the development and use of forest resources data.

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- Minnesota Logger Education Program (MLEP) and the UMN Sustainable Forests Education Cooperative.

The SFIA change will simplify participation requirements for woodland owners by eliminating the requirement for a stewardship plan writer's signature and identification number on an SFIA application. SFIA applicants, who are typically family woodland owners, report significant challenges obtaining the plan writer's written signature and writer identification number. The DNR and Department of Revenue (DOR), which administer SFIA, already track this information through a separate database, making it unnecessary for woodland owners to provide this information. Removing this application requirement will reduce the paperwork burden on SFIA applicants, without affecting the state's ability to identify stewardship plan writers.

## Statute proposal

**Sec 1.** Extends the Sustainable Forest Resources Act another seven years to 2028.

**Sec 2.** Amends 290C.04 to simplify the sustainable forest incentive program application by removing the requirement for the approved plan's writer signature and identification number.

### For more information contact:

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