

STATE OF IOWA
NATIONAL PRIORITIES SECTION
Forest Action Plan Update Report

2015

The 2008 Farm Bill, under Title VIII – Forestry, amends the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, to include the requirement that each state develop a long-term, state-wide assessment and strategies for forest resources. These assessments and strategies focused on three national priorities:

- Conserve and Manage Working Forest Landscapes for Multiple Values and Uses
- Protect Forests from Threats
- Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests

These documents were developed with a comprehensive team of stakeholders to address cross-boundary, landscape scale actions that would be the most efficient activities to address issues of concern developed for the assessment phase of the Forest Action plan.

This document provides examples/highlights of activities taken as part of Iowa’s Forest Action Plan and will be updated annually.

1. Conserve and Manage Working Forest Landscapes for Multiple Values and Uses

Issue Addressed: Conservation of Biological Diversity

Goal 9.1: Address the multitude of issues that inhibit conservation of rural and urban forest resources and forest diversity.

Objective 5: Address lack of well managed private and public forest Land

Strategy 5b: Provide technical forestry assistance and develop forest stewardship plans on public and private lands.

Strategic Actions: Foresters are annually working on completion of Forest Stewardship Plans on public areas that previously had no active forest management plans. Additionally, funding sources are being pursued to prioritize field forester private land owner assistance and outreach through site visits, planning services, forestry field days, conferences, and workshops.

Objective 8: Address lack of community forestry data on both private and public land.

Strategy 8b: Inventory priority communities along with those seeking assistance.

Strategic Action: Iowa Forestry Bureau has developed protocols for inventory of Iowa communities. Since the development of these protocols over 331 communities have been inventoried and data for these communities is made available through management plans and an interactive GIS website. The

GIS interactive website can be found at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Urban-Forestry/Community-Tree-Inventories> . Communities can zoom into to their town and this tool can be queried to develop work plans for EAB prioritization, routine maintenance and tree removal.

Objective 10: Address lack of management within the urban community forest resource.

Strategy 10b: Develop management plans to address the needs of a community's tree and forest resource.

Strategic Action: Community Forest Management Plans have been completed for almost 330 communities. Plans can be found at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Urban-Forestry/Community-Tree-Inventories> . Plans are posted following meeting with key city staff, citizens, and DNR staff.

2. Protect Forests from Threats

Issue Addressed: Forest Ecosystem Health and Vitality

Goal 9.3: Address issues that threaten forest ecosystem health

Objective 6: Address lack of trained fire personnel

Strategy 6a: Provide fire personnel with training and skills development opportunities, specifically in wildland fire incident command, suppression, and tactics.

Strategic Action: The Iowa Forestry Bureau is contracting with fire trainers to provide prescribed and wildland fire training. Over the last two years 1,371 firefighters were trained and 361 red cards were issued.

Objective 9: Address lack of prescribed fire knowledge

Strategy 9b: Produce materials to inform forest landowners about why and how they can use prescribed fire to manage their forest resource.

Strategic Action: The Iowa Forestry Bureau in cooperation with Iowa State University Extension Forestry has produced a family of prescribed fire publications covering prescribed fire basics. These publications address prescribed fire planning, tools, burn timing, and use of fire as a management tool for invasive species control and oak regeneration and are available at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/forestry/> .

Objective 1: Forest Health

Strategy 1c: Determine effective monitoring, control and regulatory needs for pests the affect Iowa's forest resource.

Strategic Action: The Iowa Forestry Bureau has developed monitoring protocols for Asian long-horned beetle and Walnut Twig Beetle. Visual ALB surveys have been conducted throughout Iowa. Over 1,000

walnut trees are trapped annually for the presence of walnut twig beetle which vectors thousand cankers disease of walnut.

Strategy 1d: Education, outreach and advocacy through forestry field days, news articles, and other mass media outlets with a focus on benefits received from forests and the lost benefits caused by an unhealthy forest resource.

Strategic Action: An “Emerging Threats” document was produced that quantified the economic impact of five emerging forest pests in Iowa’s economy. This document along with other outreach was a catalyst for convincing the Iowa legislature to direct funding to the Iowa Forestry Bureau through the creation of the Woodland Health Initiative. Outreach is also accomplished through workshops, field days and publications. The emerging threats document and other forest health publications and reports can be found at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Forest-Health> .

3. Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests

Issue Addressed: Conservation and Maintenance of Soil and Water Resources

Goal 9.4: Addresses the role of forests and trees in conserving and maintaining soil and water resources.

Objective 2: Recognition of the role of forests in maintaining and improving water quality.

Strategy 2c: Facilitate stakeholder meetings to address how trees improve water quality by encouraging policies at a local level that better manage water resources.

Strategic Action: The Iowa Forestry Bureau has utilized USDA Forest Service Competitive Funding to do several landscape level projects aimed at demonstrating the value of healthy forests on water quality. The Lake MacBride project has resulted in 3,429 acres of forest management planning, 254 acres of forest stand improvement, 47 presentations to 1,473 people, and 17 riparian buffer plans on 151 acres. The Lake MacBride Forest Management plan can be found at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Places-to-Go/State-Parks-Rec-Areas/Iowas-State-Parks/ParkDetails/ParkID/610119> . This project focused forest management activities on an area of the state where significant cultural and societal factors aligned to discourage good forest management due to misunderstandings of tree biology and silvicultural. These barriers were overcome through planning, transparency and education.

The Upper Cedar River project has resulted in re-enrollment of 2,395 acres of forested riparian buffers, 267 forest management plans on 4,140 acres, five stakeholder meetings, and four field days.

Issue Addressed: Conservation of Biological Diversity

Goal 9.1: Address the multitude of issues that inhibit conservation of rural and urban forest resources and forest diversity.

Objective 13: Address decline of oak-hickory forest types.

Strategy 13a & 13g: Target forest areas with oak-hickory canopy as places to engage landowners and public entities about methods to ensure a continuing oak-hickory forests and increasing even aged management in oak-hickory forest types.

Strategic Action: The Iowa Forestry Bureau has targeted forest management planning on its four major State Forests. The Bureau has engaged a diverse group of stakeholders and has laid out a plan to focus on oak regeneration and early successional wildlife habitat through increasing use of even-aged management and clearcutting on State Forests and State Wildlife Management Areas. This process has included education on the biological requirements for growing oak and how use of even aged management can be used to promote oak and specific suites of wildlife. Over 50,000 acres of Iowa public land is now being actively managed to conserve plant and wildlife species. Efforts are underway to expand this initiative into Iowa's State Parks. State Forest Management Plans can be found at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Places-to-Hunt-Shoot/Wildlife-Management-Areas/Forest-Stewardship-Plans> <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Places-to-Go/State-Forests> . The plans are listed under the management section of each individual State Forest. Wildlife Forest Stewardship Plans can be found at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Places-to-Hunt-Shoot/Wildlife-Management-Areas/Forest-Stewardship-Plans> .