

# Great Lakes Region Forest Workgroup

*Supporting forest landscape conservation decisions in the Great Lakes region*

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry



**Description:** The forests of the Great Lakes encompass a diverse and relatively intact landscape that provides multiple benefits to wildlife and human quality of life. The long-term sustainability of these benefits requires coordinated management and protection of the forest across multiple ownerships of the region. The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NA S&PF) is working with partners through the Great Lakes Region Forest Workgroup of the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) to identify opportunities to align priorities across the landscape. They are also working to fill data gaps, craft strategies to promote action, and develop tools to help make effective land management and protection decisions across the Great Lakes. Funding for Landscape Conservation Cooperatives comes through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers partnerships among Federal agencies, States, universities, and other private organizations. Additional funding for the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes LCC is provided through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

## Key Issues:

- Identify priorities—determine which of the many valued forest benefits should be the focus of regional science and communicate emerging issues and experience managing those priorities.
- Communicate results—distribute information to decisionmakers so they can make a coordinated response to northern forest threats through policies and management.

These issues contribute to accomplishing the following NA S&PF strategies:

- Encourage new and support existing landscape-scale partnerships, particularly in multistate priority areas identified in State Forest Action Plans, to leverage resources and more efficiently achieve results across larger geographic regions.
- Improve the management of trees and forests in priority landscapes by supporting the development and use of management plans at different scales to advance the public benefits provided.

## Project Status:

- NA S&PF employee Jeremy Peichel co-chairs the Great Lakes Region Forest Workgroup with Drs. Karl Martin and Tony D'Amato of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and University of Vermont, respectively.
- Several projects linking research to management are complete or are in progress, and the group is focusing on a conservation goal to bridge the gap between science and management.
- Stakeholder identification successfully linked the workgroup to all Great Lakes States and Ontario, and incorporated tribal and nonprofit members.

## Future Direction:

- The group will monitor, advance, and share management topics of interest—including endangered species concerns and invasive plants, insects, and disease—across the community of stakeholders.
- Using a Landscape Conservation Design process, decision support and planning will focus on solutions to common challenges and lessons learned from the Great Lakes States and Ontario.

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