



Forestry Assistance

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The Forestry Assistance Program is designed to support family forest owners in realizing the economic, social, and ecological sustainability of their forests. Conservation district foresters help family forest owners understand the value of actively managed forest resources. They also refer landowners to private sector professionals for management plan development, forest management, timber valuation, and harvests.

IMPACT FOR MICHIGAN:

Nearly 50 percent of Michigan's 19 million acres of forestland is owned by non-industrial private forestland owners (family forest owners). Family forest owners contribute 64 percent of Michigan's timber supply. The forest products industry contributes more than \$20 billion to the state's economy annually with the potential to contribute much more. Only one-third of the growth of timber on private forestlands is currently being harvested.

2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Conducted 1,913 landowner site visits.
- Referred \$9.9 million in forest management projects for private landowners.
- Completed 41 risk assessments for the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program's Forest, Wetlands, and Habitat System.
- Completed 24 American Tree Farm inspections.
- Delivered 263 outreach events targeted to family forest owners, foresters, and loggers.

MEASURING SUCCESS:

| Metric | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Outreach events | 407 | 368 | 398 | 190 | 210 | 263 |
| On-site visits to family forest owners | 2,037 | 2,007 | 2,098 | 2,021 | 2,143 | 1,913 |
| Service referrals to the private sector | 864 | 1,070 | 1,129 | 1,107 | 1,101 | 938 |
| Service referrals to the public sector | 663 | 907 | 797 | 1,999 | 1,064 | 1,092 |
| Service referrals for timber harvest | 335 | 413 | 426 | 360 | 385 | 287 |
| Estimated value of referrals (millions) | \$10.1 | \$9.7 | \$11.9 | \$13.4 | \$10.5 | \$9.9 |
| Acres referred to Qualified Forest | 77,224 | 55,409 | 167,883 | 71,381 | 69,034 | 50,333 |

2023 PROGRAM GOALS:

- Increase awareness and enrollment in Michigan’s Qualified Forest Program.
- Implement actions identified in the 10-year master plan.
- Implement “Climate Action and Reforestation in Northern Michigan” Regional Conservation Partnership Program project.
- Conduct 2,000 on-site visits to forest properties.
- Conduct 2,000 referrals to the public and private sectors.



KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

- Family forest owners
- Private sector professional foresters
- Michigan’s forest products industry
- Local units of government
- Conservation districts
- Forestry, wildlife, and conservation advocacy groups

LEGAL AUTHORITY:

- Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Public Act 451 of 1994, Part 93 (Soil Conservation Districts), as amended