

NEWS



Land Services Department
Public Land Management
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CROW WING COUNTY
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County Natural Resource Managers Cover the Ground

County Natural Resource Managers covered the ground in 2011 as part of their management responsibilities on the 103,000 acres of county managed forest land. A year end Land Services report shows that nearly 6,400 acres of county forest land were inventoried, cruised or surveyed in 2011.

An accurate forest inventory provides the foundation for sustainable forest management decisions. The data is used for both strategic (long term) and tactical (short term) forest management planning. Inventory data collected at the stand level includes the species, tree diameter, height, age and density. Each timber stand or tract is expected to be inventoried following a major disturbance, when inaccurate data is found prior to management and at least every 20 years. Over 2,882 acres of county land were inventoried by staff in 2011. Kirk Titus, Land Services Supervisor stated, "The County has substantially increased its focus on the importance of accurate and reliable forest inventory in the past few years. By the end of this year, we will have completed 25,000 acres of forest inventory work in the last four years".

Timber cruising provides a more intensive survey than forest inventory with the objective of estimating the volume of cords or lumber a tract will yield. During a timber cruise, the Natural Resource Manager estimates the quantity by species, products, size and quality of the trees to be harvested for a future timber sale. 1,610 acres were cruised last year yielding over 30,000 cords of timber sold to area logging contractors and mills.

Regeneration surveys are conducted on all County lands that have been planted, aerially seeded, direct seeded, or naturally regenerated. Natural Resource Managers evaluate the current conditions in planted pine and spruce stands and naturally regenerating hardwood stands of oak, birch, maple, and aspen by identifying the dominant tree species, the trees per acre and the stocking level distribution. If inadequate regeneration occurs, the county considers additional planting of native tree species. "Trees are a renewable resource and the 2011 regeneration survey of 1,858 acres showed that 99% of the harvested lands are fully stocked and growing the next generation of healthy trees" stated Titus.

The County manages 103,000 acres of forest land for timber production and diverse recreational opportunities for multiple users. The sale of timber at public auctions during the year funds the County's management of these lands, while providing revenues to local communities. County forest lands are managed to strict environmental standards established by both the Sustainable Forestry Initiative™ and the Forest Stewardship Council™ certification standards.

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