

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS

Sites considered for selection as High Conservation Value Forests are evaluated and ranked in a systematic fashion. Basic data developed and used to rigorously determine qualification includes these sources:

- Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (WNHI)
- Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan (WWAP)
- Wisconsin's Ecological Landscape guidance document
- Wisconsin Land Legacy report
- US Forest Service Ecoregions
- State Fish and Wildlife conservation plans
- State Historical Society
- State Geologists Office
- State Lands Recon data (WisFIRS)
- Tribes
- Conservation Partners
- Local Experts
- Other

Selection Criteria for High Conservation Value Forests 1.1

An area that is legally protected and managed primarily for its biodiversity values at the Wisconsin ecological landscape scale. To qualify as a high conservation value forest 1.1, the site must meet the one or both of the following criteria

1. The site would contain a natural community ranked as globally rare (G1, G2, G3) by WNHI
2. The site would contain an "A" or "B" rank natural community ranked as rare in the state (S1, or S2) by WNHI.

Selection Criteria for High Conservation Value Forests 1.2

An area with presence of rare, threatened or endangered species, endemic species and/or natural communities that is significant at the ecological landscape scale. The WNHI database is used to determine the biological ranking from a global and statewide perspective. These ranks are enumerated in the NHI working list. To qualify as a critical species habitat HCVF, the site must meet either, No. 1 or 2, plus No. 3 of the following criteria.

1. Sites with globally rare species (G1, G2, or G3) or federally-listed species habitat.
2. Sites contain habitat with "A" or "B" quality ranks for state-listed species.
3. The site should possess the likelihood that designation, along with appropriate management, would adequately protect the species. (for example, Fassett's locoweed may be adequately protected by designation and management, while the wide-ranging timber wolf would not)

Selection Criteria for High Conservation Value Forests 2

An area that contains globally, regionally, or nationally significant large landscape levels forest, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally-occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance. To qualify as a high conservation value forest 1.1, the site must meet the one or both of the following criteria:

Master plan identifies the site as a NATIVE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT AREA. In the master plan, a native community management area shall be consistent with the following:

(a) Definition. For purposes of this subsection, "native community" means a distinct and reoccurring assemblage of populations of plants, animals, bacteria and fungi naturally associated with each other and their physical environment and which are indigenous to the area.

(b) Management objective. The management objective of a native community management area is to represent, restore and perpetuate native plant and animal communities, whether upland, wetland or aquatic, and other aspects of native biological diversity. Areas that initially do not have the desired community conditions but have a reasonable potential to be restored to those conditions may be included under this classification.

(c) Management. Management activities shall be designed to achieve land management objectives through natural processes and management techniques that mimic those processes whenever possible. A master plan may authorize any management activity or technique that is consistent with the management objective specified in the master plan for the area, and is compatible with the site's ecological capability. Only those management activities or techniques identified by the master plan for the management area may be pursued.

Selection Criteria for High Conservation Value Forests 3

Rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems are recognized and protected. To qualify as a high conservation value forest 3, the site must meet the one of the following criteria:

1. Type 1 Old Growth meets the definition of relict forest stands found in the Old-Growth and Old Forest Handbook
2. Type 2 Old Growth meets the definition of managed old-growth or old forest stands found in the Old-Growth and Old Forest Handbook
3. The site contains a natural community with less than ten known occurrences and ranked as globally rare (G1, G2,) by WNIH

Selection Criteria for High Conservation Value Forests 4

Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations.

Wisconsin does not have known locations meeting this criterion.

Selection Criteria for High Conservation Value Forests 5

Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities.

Wisconsin does not have known locations meeting this criterion.

Selection Criteria for High Conservation Value Forests 6

An area critical to local communities' traditional cultural identify. To qualify as a high conservation value forest 6, the site must meet the following criterion:

The site contains a mound or mound groups and is listed by the Wisconsin State Historical Society as being a historical, cultural, archaeological or paleontological site.

NOTE: Some sites can qualify for two or more HCVF categories, such as an old-growth site providing habitat for an endangered species, and thus may be double counted as acres in state wide summaries.