



LEAF-Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program  
 College of Natural Resources  
**University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point**

Enriching Students. Sustaining Forests.  
**LEAF: Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program**

**LEAF** was created to help promote forestry education in Wisconsin schools. In 2001, Wisconsin K-12 forestry education stakeholders evaluated the current status of and the needs for Wisconsin-based K-12 forestry education. A variety of programs existed, but voids were identified in delivery and dissemination of educational materials and services. To offer a more unified effort, stakeholders supported the development of a comprehensive program that would enhance existing efforts.

During the spring of 2001, legislation was written to establish the LEAF program as a partnership between the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources-Division of Forestry and the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education at the College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Funding for the program is provided through a surcharge on the sale of seedlings from Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources-Division of Forestry nurseries.

**LEAF**

Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE)  
 College of Natural Resources (CNR)  
 University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP)  
 Stevens Point, WI 54481  
**715.356.4956** • leaf@uwsp.edu



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## PROGRAMS FOR FORESTERS

### LEAF STAFF

**Becca Franzen**

Director

**Gretchen Marshall**

Forestry and Outdoor Education Specialist

**Nicole Filizetti**

Program Development Specialist and Project Learning Tree State Coordinator

**Steve Schmidt**

LEAF Outreach Specialist

**Heather Phelps**

Resource Specialist

**Gina Smith**

Resource Specialist

**Matthew Brown**

Communications Coordinator

**Jamie Mollica**

Outreach Support Coordinator

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We are grateful to the following individuals for their direction and assistance with creating this resource:

**Kirsten Held**

Natural Resources Staff Specialist, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

**Steve Kaufman**

Forester, Wisconsin DNR

**Brooke Ludwig**

Tax Law Administration Specialist, Wisconsin DNR

**Scott Mueller**

Forestry Specialist, Wisconsin DNR

**Kara Oikarinen**

Forester Ranger, Wisconsin DNR

**Brian Wahl**

Forestry Specialist, Wisconsin DNR

**Sara Ward**

Forester Ranger, Wisconsin DNR

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### PUBLICATION DESIGN

Jackie Bowe, JLB Design, LLC

# PROGRAMS FOR FORESTERS

## INCLUDED IN THIS ACTIVITY GUIDE

- TEMPLATES to use to email educators (initial, confirmation, follow-up)
- TIPS for working indoors or outdoors in rural or urban settings with various grade levels
- INTRODUCTION and THEME 1: What Does a Forester Do? Allows you a chance to introduce yourself and share the role of a forester.
- THEMES 2 through 5 include activities that support the most-requested topics for forester presentations
  - Theme 2: Caring for the Forest
  - Theme 3: Forest Products and Benefits
  - Theme 4: Tree Planting and Forest Health
  - Theme 5: The Role of Fire in Forests
- PRINTABLE themes in PDF format
- DIGITAL/GOOGLE RESOURCES to support each lesson
- LEAF RESOURCES educators can use after your visit to support additional learning

## PROGRAM/ACTIVITY BEST PRACTICES

To make the most of your experience we suggest that you:

- Use the email templates to communicate with the teacher in advance of and following your program/visit.
- Review the activity you have selected.
- Consider modifications you can make to the activity to best meet the needs of your audience.
- Print Forester Guide resources you will use during your program/visit.
- Print any student materials that will be needed for your program/visit.
- Collect materials needed for each activity well in advance of your program.



## RATIONALE

This resource will help you prepare an age-appropriate, interactive, outdoor (modifiable to indoor) program/activity for youth in grades Kindergarten through 12. Each program/activity enriches existing lessons from LEAF's Wisconsin K-12 Forestry Lesson Guides.



## PROGRAMS FOR FORESTERS

### WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR) KEY TARGET MESSAGES

Developed for use by professional foresters, this guide helps ensure that a consistent message is given in classrooms throughout the state. Each program communicates one or more of the Wisconsin DNR's target messages which include:

1. Wisconsin has a plan to sustain the healthy, working forests vital to Wisconsin's well-being.
2. Forests and forest products have a key role in supporting climate resilience.
3. Diversity in both the forest resource and the forestry workforce is vital.
4. Forests are important to both rural and urban prosperity.
5. Forests support local economies with revenue from forest recreation as well as forest products and jobs.
6. Forests are a renewable resource providing products, aesthetics and recreational opportunities important to our everyday lives.
7. Forests support other vital natural resources in Wisconsin, including clean air, water, and wildlife habitat.
8. Everyone can help sustain Wisconsin forests (by being careful with fire, not spreading invasive species, using wood products rather than alternatives, planting and caring for a native tree, enjoying the outdoors responsibly and more).

*Updated by Natural Resources Staff Specialist, Kirsten Held  
Approved by Chief State Forester, Heather Berklund, February 2022*



Photo Credit: Wisconsin DNR

# PROGRAMS FOR FORESTERS

## TIPS FOR VARIOUS AUDIENCES

### Kindergarten Through 4th Grade

- Be patient and provide clear expectations and directions. Limit instructions to 1 or 2 steps at a time.
- Be aware of their distractibility.
- Before they will care about your topic, they need to know you care for them and are interested in them.
- Share your personal stories, anecdotes and experiences. YOU are a lot cooler than a concept.
- Don't be afraid to have fun with them; let your guard down.
- Answer, or attempt to answer, their questions, whether they are on topic or not, then move on.
- Smile! Enjoy the diversions, but redirect with clear boundaries.
- In Kindergarten and 1st Grade, children can understand your instructions, but cannot read well.

### 5th Grade Through High School

- Be positive. If you are, chances are they will be too.
- Listen! Students need to know you care about them and the topic.
- Your energy and enthusiasm can be significant in getting disinterested students engaged in learning.
- Be patient.
- Avoid embarrassing students or singling them out.
- Expect some students will have short attention spans and an inability to concentrate.
- Be a good role model.
- Walk a mile in their shoes – try to remember what you were like at their age and treat students as you would have liked to be treated.



### CONNECT TO YOUR AUDIENCE

Engage them! This is the most important aspect of your presentation!

### CONNECT YOUR AUDIENCE TO THE FOREST

Remind them WHY forests matter!

### CONNECT YOUR AUDIENCE TO PLACE

Whenever possible, get your audience outdoors!



## PROGRAMS FOR FORESTERS

### PRESENTATION KIT ITEMS

LEAF recommends putting together a tote or box that you can take along when you travel to engagements. While you will still need to pack items specific to each engagement, it is recommended that you bring the following items to all engagements:

- Vest
- Helmet
- Compass
- Maps
- Radio
- Calculator
- Biltmore sticks/cruising sticks
- Diameter tapes
- Deep Woods Off
- Chaps for briars
- Fire equipment/tools

### GOOGLE RESOURCES FOR FORESTER PROFESSIONALS

LEAF has created digital resources to support your work with teachers and students. Resources include:

- HOW-TO ARTICLES for using the Forester Activity Guide
- PRINTABLE PDFs of each theme
- SLIDESHOW PRESENTATIONS for each theme (Google slides format)
  - Easy to download and edit to meet your needs
  - Used by most K-12 educators and easy to access/share
- PRINTABLE versions of all student materials (PDF format)
- Initial Request Letter Template (Google docs format)
- Theme-specific Confirmation and Follow-up Letter Templates (Google docs format)

All digital resources can be accessed using the Google Resources for Forestry Professionals link on the LEAF website: [uwsp.edu/wcee/wcee/leaf/leaf-curriculum/lessons-for-forestry-professionals/](http://uwsp.edu/wcee/wcee/leaf/leaf-curriculum/lessons-for-forestry-professionals/)

# PROGRAMS FOR FORESTERS



## LETTER TEMPLATE – INITIAL REQUEST LETTER

Dear (Insert Your Name),

Thank you for your interest in having me visit your class. In order to provide the best experience for your students, it would be helpful if you could answer the following questions for me:

- What is the ideal date and time for my visit? What other dates/times would work for you?
- How long would you like the activity/presentation to be?
- Where will the presentation take place? Indoors or outdoors?  
If outdoors, please describe the area/space we are able to use.
- About how many students will I be working with?
- Have your students already been learning about forests and/or forestry? If so, what topics have they already learned about?

All of my presentations begin with an introduction that explores the theme What Does a Forester Do? After that, I have materials and activities that I can present related to the following themes:

- Caring for the Forest
- Forest Products and Benefits
- Tree Planting and Forest Health
- The Role of Fire in Forests

Please let me know which of these themes would best meet the needs of your students. If none of these themes are an excellent fit, please share other ideas you might have for my visit. I may be reached at (insert email and phone number/extension).

Sincerely,

(Insert Your Name)

Consider using the text from this letter to reach out to educators in advance of your program or visit.

A digital version of this letter can be accessed using the Google resource for Forestry Professionals on the LEAF website.

[uwsp.edu/wcee/wcee/leaf/leaf-curriculum/lessons-for-forestry-professionals/](http://uwsp.edu/wcee/wcee/leaf/leaf-curriculum/lessons-for-forestry-professionals/)



# PROGRAMS FOR FORESTERS

**INTRODUCTION..... 1**  
Programs for Foresters

**THEME 1 ..... 9**  
What Does a Forester Do?

**THEME 2..... 18**  
Caring for the Forest

**THEME 3..... 35**  
Forest Products and Benefits

**THEME 4..... 50**  
Tree Planting and Forest Health

**THEME 5..... 73**  
The Role of Fire in Forests



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