

Wisconsin Forestry Center

2023 Annual Report

WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

APPLIED RESEARCH

PUBLIC OUTREACH

ABOUT THE WFC

The Wisconsin Forestry Center (WFC), part of the College of Natural Resources at UW-Stevens Point, serves Wisconsin's forestry community through professional development, workforce development, applied research, and public outreach initiatives that promote vibrant, sustainable forests and forest-based economies.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

WISCONSIN FORESTRY CAREERS COALITION (WFCC):

Continued to develop the WFCC, a forestry education and career pathway program, in collaboration with many partners and support from a \$8 million state grant.

- › **HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM:** Exhibited at 3 teacher conferences and 3 high school career fairs, reaching 920 students and teachers. The 4 curriculum modules were completed and will be piloted during spring 2024 and available to schools in fall 2024.
- › **FOREST OPERATIONS TRAINING PROGRAM:** The curriculum was mapped out and will consist of 3 modules (Intro to Forestry, Forestry Equipment Maintenance, and Forestry Equipment Operations) for a total of 5 credits. The program will be offered for the first time in fall 2024. Designs and bidding were completed for the Forestry Advancement Center at Treehaven.
- › **MILL TECHNOLOGY TRAINING PROGRAM:** Construction of the sawmill facility began at Northcentral Technical College in Antigo. Curriculum was outlined and will feature 5 classes (Sawmill Safety & Maintenance, Sawmill Operations, Intro to Hardwood Grading, Intro to Kiln Drying, and Lumber Manufacturing) for a total of 6 credits.
- › **EQUIPMENT:** Training equipment was purchased, including 2 Ponsse harvester simulators, 2 Polaris UTVs, a Case skid steer with attachments, and a Case tractor with log loader. Portable kilns and equipment trailers were constructed.



Gov. Tony Evers visited the WFC in March 2023 to learn about the WFCC. He tested out a Ponsse simulator and met with forestry students.

FOREST OPERATIONS TRAINING NETWORK: Organized the first Forest Operations Training National Summit, represented by programs from 6 states. The summit is leading to the creation of a national network of forest operations training providers.

2023 FARM BILL: The WFC played a leading role in crafting the language for the Jobs in the Woods Act, proposed legislation for inclusion in the 2023 Farm Bill.

TREE FELLING COURSE: Offered a 3-day Science of Tree Felling course in March 2023 at Treehaven, with 5 high school students and 20 UWSP students participating.

FORESTRY JOBS BOARD: The WFC launched a Forestry Jobs Board on its website, serving the industry and job seekers at all levels of their careers.

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WORKSHOPS/TRAININGS: Offered 12 in-person, virtual, and online workshops, with a total of 909 participants from North America, Canada, Asia, South America, and Europe. Launched a year-long Prescribed Fire webinar series with an international reach.

ONLINE COURSES: Offered 6 on-demand online courses, with a total of 98 participants.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS: Offered the Foundations of Utility Vegetation Management (UVM), with 11 graduates, and the UVM Professional certificate, with 109 total participants.



SILVICAST PODCAST: Released 11 episodes in Season 4, surpassing more than 35,000 downloads worldwide.

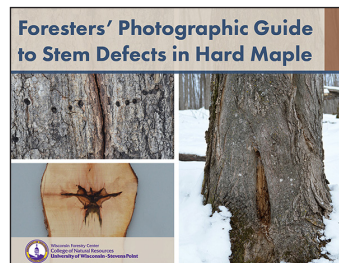


The WFC hosted 47 attendees at a White Cedar Forest Management Workshop in June 2023 in Oconto County.

APPLIED RESEARCH

HARDWOOD DEFECT

GUIDES: Published *A Photographic Guide to Stem Defects in Hard Maple* and launched a follow-up project to examine defects in red oak.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS RESEARCH:

Distributed a training needs assessment survey, with 364 respondents. Findings were presented at the Society of American Foresters (SAF) National Conference, where the research was awarded first place in the poster symposium.

DNR NEW-FORESTER TRAINING: Coordinated 1 offering of Silviculture Orientation with 10 participants and 3 offerings of Introduction to WisFIRS Public with 42 participants.

DNR LOCAL USE LUMBER CERTIFICATE:

In collaboration with the DNR, coordinated registration and participant database for 6 offerings of the Local Use Dimension Lumber Grading Certificate course, with 184 participants.

NRCS NATIONAL FORESTRY HANDBOOK: Continued a contract with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to coordinate a full revision of the National Forestry Handbook, a training resource for conservation planners.

FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY COST GUIDE:

Published online an interactive decision-support tool to approximate the cost of various forest management activities. The tool aims to encourage small-scale (10 to 49 acres) family forest owners to make economically wise decisions regarding their forestland.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

WOMEN'S WOODLAND GATHERING: In collaboration with the DNR, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, Aldo Leopold Foundation, and UW-Madison Division of Extension, offered a 2-day retreat for 31 participants.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: In partnership with the UW-Stevens Point LIFE program, offered 6 in-person workshops with 37 participants. In partnership with UW-Stevens Point Continuing Education and Outreach, offered workshops for 2 STEAM Days, reaching 50 youth.

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS: WFC staff attended several conferences and meetings, including: Wisconsin SAF, National SAF, WAA, Wisconsin Technical Education Association, Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers, GLTPA Spring Celebration, Wisconsin SFI, Wisconsin Council on Forestry, Midwest State Foresters, Great Lakes Logging Expo, Wisconsin Economic Development Summit, Forest Resources Association (FRA), and a Forestry Workforce Summit.