Costs and Benefits of
Forest Policies in Wisconsin:

An Assessment of
Research Needs & Priorities

Presentation to Wisconsin Council on Forestry
December 20, 2012

Alan A. Lucier, Ph.D.
Senior VP, NCASI

Statement of Need & Opportunity

- There are large and important gaps in information about the costs and benefits of forest policies, regulations and guidelines in Wisconsin.

- Addressing these information gaps through a well-focused program of research would establish a knowledge platform for:

  – addressing concerns about current policies;

  – ensuring that the forestry situation in Wisconsin is favorable for long-term investment in forest-based manufacturing industries.

Information Gap #1

- How many acres of "working forests" exist in WI?

- Where are they located?

- What is their capacity to produce reliable, high-quality supplies of wood over the long term?

Options for Addressing Gap #1

A. Comprehensive statewide analysis - e.g.

- Identify and delineate non-reserved forest parcels.

- Classify non-reserved parcels by variables known to influence timber productivity.

- Develop estimates of timber productivity for each class of non-reserved forested land.

B. Smaller pilot analysis of a selected region.

Information Gap #2

- Economic & ecological consequences of regulations and guidelines related to:

  ➢ rotation lengths in aspen & red pine stands

  ➢ retention of large trees past economic maturity in natural hardwood stands

  ➢ seasonal and weather-related restrictions on timber harvest operations
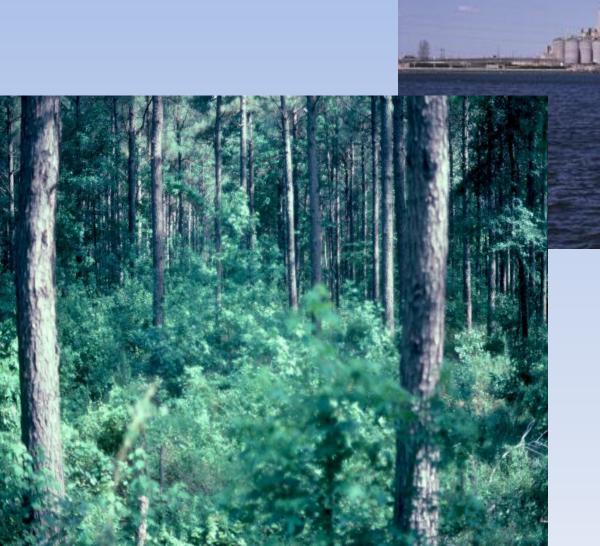
  ➢ other high-priority topics

Suggested Approach to Gap #2

- Case studies focused on selected parcels where forest managers and loggers are willing to share information with researchers.

- Deliverables = stand-level models of economic costs and ecological benefits attributable to a specific set of regulations or guidelines.

- Stand-level models will serve as a foundation for subsequent analyses of cumulative effects of WI's forestry regulations and guidelines.

6

Next Steps?

- Determine whether there is support for the research priorities and approaches outlined in this assessment within the Council and Division of Forestry.

- If yes, develop options for funding, organizing, and executing the work.

Discussion?

Questions?