



# Implementation of Wisconsin's Biomass Harvesting Guidelines on Wisconsin's County Forests

2010 – 2012

# Request for Input from Counties

## August 2012

- ▶ Implementation of the guidelines; ease or difficulty/practicality of implementation
  - Difficult to retain required FWD/CWD
    - Sufficient retention through incidental breakage on certain timber types or on all sales
  
- ▶ Restrictive Soils
  - How have soil restrictions impacted biomass or whole tree harvest operations in your county
    - Have soil restrictions changed harvest patterns or stumpage prices?
  
- ▶ Any other information you can provide



# Implementation

## CWD/FWD Retention Levels

- ▶ Clark County – Clark County has a very active whole tree chip harvesting program on the county forest. The stumpage value of these products exceeded \$384,000 (15% of total stumpage received) by Clark County in 2012. Also represents 20% of all harvested volume. The majority of the whole tree chip volume goes to Marshfield Door Company in Marshfield. Marshfield Door favors FSC certified aspen and basswood chips and Clark County supplies a large percentage of their raw materials. Stumpage prices paid by whole tree chippers are on average considerably higher than round wood operators.

# Implementation

## CWD/FWD Retention Levels

- ▶ Clark County – questions the need and practicality of retaining 1 in 10 tops on site.
  - Difficult to top trees in the woods on a whole tree operation using feller bunchers and grapple skidders.
  - County is allowing contractors to fell and leave entire trees on site equivalent to the volume of 1 in 10.



# Implementation

## CWD/FWD Retention Levels

### ► Bayfield County

- One in ten requirement makes it almost impossible to document if inadequate utilization is a problem on a timber sale.
- FWD is defined as starting at the 4" top mark but markets are constantly in flux and many operators utilize to 2" or 3". Suggest FWD is redefined as material other than the merchantable bole of the tree, as defined by the resource manager.



# Implementation

## CWD/FWD Retention Levels

- ▶ Douglas County – Difficult to limit the disturbance on CWD already present due to current equipment used in whole tree operations while trying to maximize utilization standards. This is an operational concern as we are retaining 10% of tops, incidental breakage, existing FWD, and stumps



# Effects of Restricted Soils

- ▶ Polk County – small county forest; 17,143 acres  
“The restrictive soils have basically eliminated any whole tree chipping operations here in Polk County. It used to be fairly common to have at least one whole tree chipper bid on each sale.”
- ▶ Administrator indicated it is difficult to say for sure that timber sale bid prices have dropped due to the restriction but it has eliminated one if not more bidders from the process. Typically Polk County only has 3–7 bidders so taking one out is a bid deal.
- ▶ December timber sale – only 6 out of 8 sales were sold. Administrator indicated there could be many factors involved with the poor timber sale in December

# Effects of Restricted Soils

- ▶ Florence County has allowed whole tree chipping in standing dead scrub oak stands
  - Administrator feels there is a surprisingly large amount of woody debris remaining on the sites due to incidental breakage, etc. After observing this he finds it troubling that biomass harvesting or whole tree operations are restricted on about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their forest; 36,386.8 acres.
  - Would like to see consideration given for applying ash or mill residue on harvest sites.





# Effects of Restricted Soils

- ▶ Bayfield County – “The restrictive soils rule has eliminated pretty much all of the soils that can be operated on by whole tree operations during spring breakup and many of the sand sites that can be operated on during wet periods. This will result in more downtime for the whole tree crews.”
  - “One of our main whole tree operators recently had his equipment repossessed. The biomass restrictions may or may not have contributed but I do know he was very concerned about the number of sales he was no longer able to do due to restricted soils.”

# Effects of Restricted Soils

- ▶ Burnett County – “This is a big issue for Burnett County ,especially in our scrub oak stands that fall on these soils.”
  - Oak wilt issue
  - Oak market in poor condition, limiting any market has a direct impact on selling the timber sales
  - By eliminating whole tree operations on these sites the county is drastically reducing cords per acre production (20% – 30%)



# Additional Concerns

- ▶ Research regarding nutrient loss and suggestions for alternative solutions
- ▶ Red pine on restricted soils
- ▶ Counties with soil restrictions different than those listed

