

# Governor's Designations under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act 2014 Farm Bill

Council on Forestry

August 1, 2014

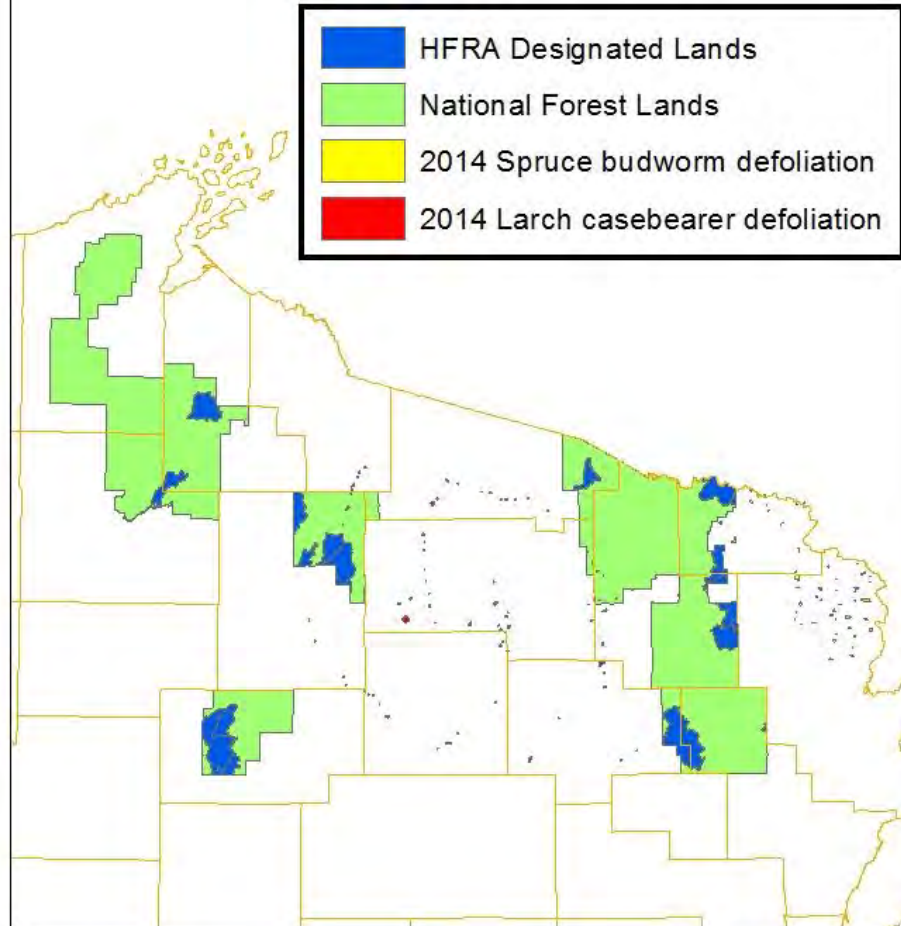
# Approved Designations

Governor Walker petitioned for 22 areas to be designated in April 2014

All 22 requested Watersheds were designated in May 2014

Total NFS acreage within these watersheds:  
~191,000 acres

# National Forest System Lands Designated Under Section 602 of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act in Wisconsin



07/30/2014

# USFS Interpretation of HFRA Provision

The Farm Bill provides that certain collaborative projects may be conducted under a categorical exclusion and be exempt from administrative review, IF they meet a number of requirements including:

- maximizing the retention of old-growth and large trees, as appropriate for the forest type;
- maintaining or restoring the ecological integrity, including maintaining or restoring structure, function, composition, and connectivity;
- developed through a collaborative;
- **in a watershed in Condition Class II or III or is in the WUI;**
- don't include any permanent new roads

# Constraints in Approved Designations

To be eligible for the Categorical Exclusion NEPA project planning tool, an area must be:

- Experiencing I&D problems, forest health issue, imminent risk to property, human health, etc.

AND

- Within one of the designated watersheds
- Take place in the wildland-urban interface **(42,926 acres)**

or

- Be in vegetation condition Class 2 or 3 in Fire Regime Groups I, II, or III for areas outside the wildland urban interface **(36,494 acres)**

# Composition of Eligible Acres

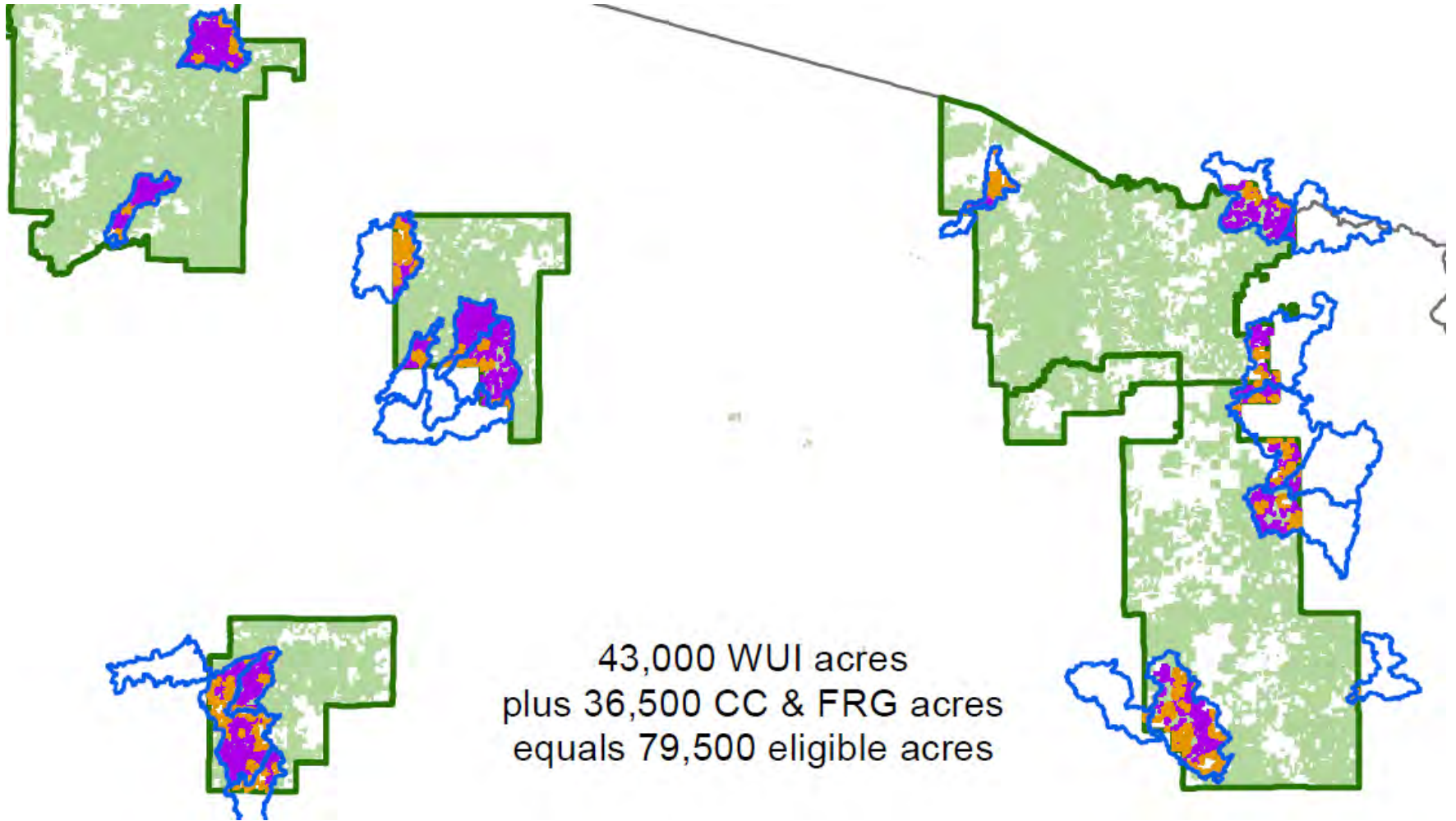
The total acres eligible based on these filters is about 79,400 acres (41.5% of all NFS acres within designated watersheds)

There are approximately 47,705 forested acres out of the 79,400 eligible acres.

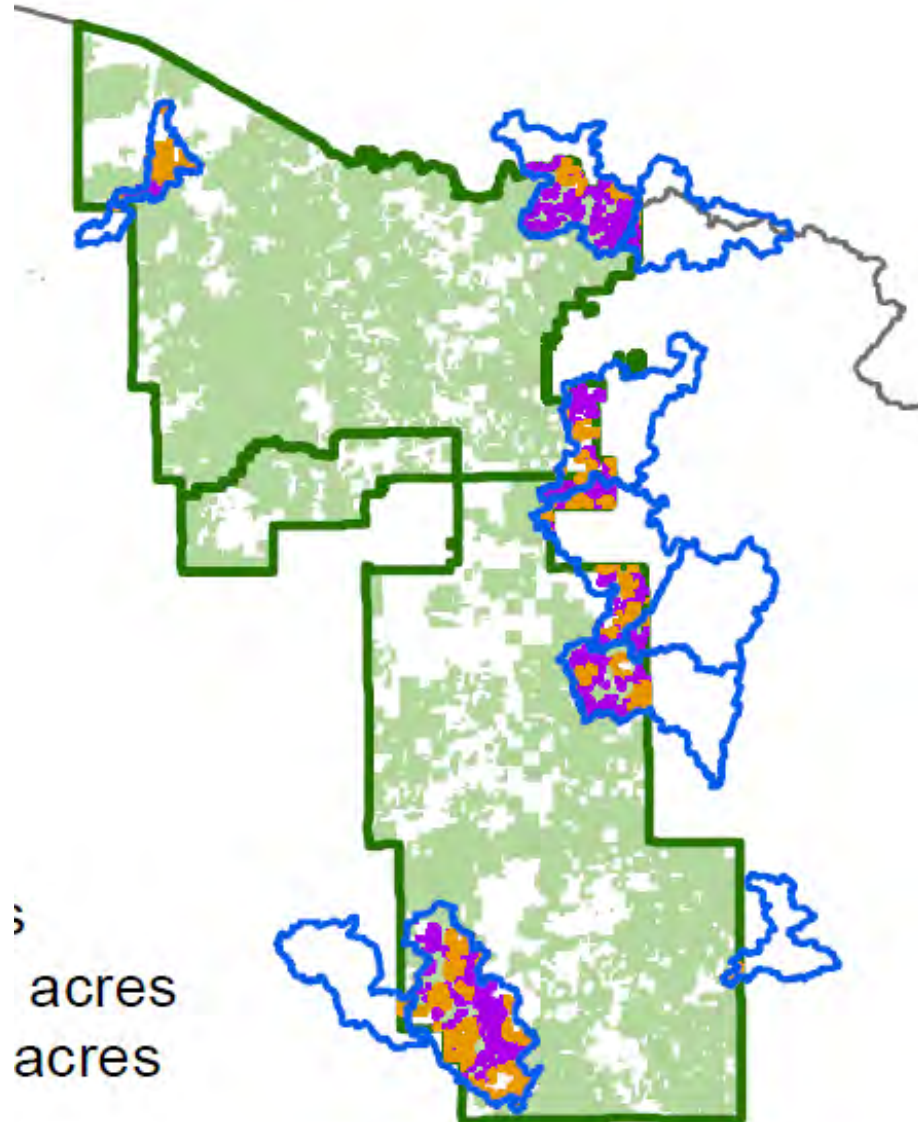
Of the forested acres, the breakdown is as follows based on stand typing we use:

- Aspen/Birch 19,862
- Hemlock 318
- Jack Pine 1,340
- **Lowland Hardwoods 3,230**
- **Northern Hardwoods 13,998**
- **Oak 922**
- Red/White Pine 5,002
- Spruce/Fir 3,032

# Eligible Acres



# Eligible Acres: Nicolet Side





# Maple Decline

What the CNNF learned from staff involved with developing the risk map explaining why maple decline is projected on parts of the Nicolet NF:

- Risk is based on high maple abundance, older age (size), and/or soil dryness – any two of these can result in high risk.
- Although soil dryness is not a factor on the Nicolet NF where sugar maple occurs, it is abundance and age that contribute to risk.
- Sugar maple has a variety of insect defoliators as inciting factors of decline and some occurrence of these during the next 15 years is likely.
- As with all the risk models, the 15 year future time frame is with a scenario of no forest management.
- The 17% projected “loss” of sugar maple over 15 years is 5% above a baseline rate of 12% according to FIA data. This is potential risk, not reality.

# Maple Decline

Maple decline as a potential mortality agent was included and showed up with a level of risk on the NIDRM map because:

- It has been seen before in Northern Wisconsin
- The abundance and age of maple stands present met the criteria for risk
- Defoliators are likely to occur in the area in the next 15 years
- There is an assumption of no forest management which pushes projected mortality rates beyond the 15% threshold used in the mapping/evaluation exercise

# Next Steps

- Clarify eligibility requirements; reduce ambiguity
- Assess opportunities to pursue specific projects under the HFRA
- Use a CE wherever possible to reduce resources needed to establish projects
- Visit the Armstrong Creek area in Forest County to assess current status and future needs?