



2023 ASSEMBLY BILL 1162

March 22, 2024 - Introduced by Representatives SAPIK, MURSAU, SWEARINGEN, S. JOHNSON, GREEN, ARMSTRONG, CALLAHAN and EDMING, cosponsored by Senators QUINN, COWLES and KNODL. Referred to Committee on Forestry, Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

1 **AN ACT relating to:** county forest administration grant eligibility.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill makes a change to eligibility for a county forest administration grant.

Current law authorizes the Department of Natural Resources to make grants to counties that have lands designated as county forest to fund 50 percent of a professional forester for county forest administrator or assistant county forest administrator (county forest administration grant program). Current DNR administrative rules regulating the county forest administration grant program define “forester” as a person, other than one employed by DNR, who has received a bachelor’s or higher degree in forestry from a school of forestry with a curriculum accredited by the Society of American Foresters or an equivalent degree, as determined by the chief state forester, or who is employed as a county forest administrator or assistant county forest administrator in the administration of county forests as of August 12, 1993. This bill replaces the administrative code term “forester” with “county forest administrator” and defines it to mean a person employed to manage a county forest program (excluding a DNR employee) who has any of the following qualifications:

1. A bachelor’s or higher degree in forestry from a school of forestry with a curriculum accredited by the Society of American Foresters or an equivalent degree, as determined by the chief state forester.

2. A bachelor’s or higher degree in natural resources, conservation, or wildlife and three or more years of experience managing a county forest program.

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3. An associate degree in forestry and three or more years of experience managing a county forest program.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** NR 47.70 (1) of the administrative code is amended to read:

2 NR 47.70 (1) PURPOSE. The purpose of this section is to establish standards and
3 procedures for implementation of a grant program to contribute funds towards
4 payment of the salary and fringe benefits of a professional forester in the position of
5 ~~administrator or assistant administrator~~ of a county forest administrator and also
6 payment of a county's dues to a non-profit organization that provides leadership and
7 counsel to a county forest administrator and serves as an organizational liaison to
8 the department.

9 **SECTION 2.** NR 47.70 (2) (dm) of the administrative code is created to read:

10 NR 47.70 (2) (dm) "County forest administrator" means an individual who is
11 employed to manage a county forest program under ss. 28.10 and 28.11, Stats., and
12 who has any of the following qualifications, except that it does not include an
13 individual who is employed by the department:

14 1. A bachelor's or higher degree in forestry from a school of forestry with a
15 curriculum accredited by the Society of American Foresters or an equivalent degree,
16 as determined by the chief state forester.

17 2. A bachelor's or higher degree in natural resources, conservation, or wildlife
18 and 3 or more years of experience managing a county forest program under ss. 28.10
19 and 28.11, Stats.

20 3. An associate degree in forestry and 3 or more years of experience managing
21 a county forest program under ss. 28.10 and 28.11, Stats.

