Natural Resources

Forests and Parks

(LFB Budget Summary Document: Page 399)

LFB Summary Items for Which Issue Papers Have Been Prepared

Item #	Title
1	Shift Stewardship Debt Service to Forestry Account (Paper #580)
2	Forest Landowner Grant Program (Paper #581)
3	Local Fire Department Equipment Assistance Grants (Paper #582)
6	Highway Landscaping Initiative (Paper #583)
11	Forest Landscape Ecology Research (Paper #584)
16	Travel Information Centers -- LTE Funding (see Paper #803)
19	Convert Pike Lake State Park to a Southern Forest Property (Paper #585)
22	Campground Reservation System (Paper #586)

To: Joint Committee on Finance

From: Bob Lang, Director
Legislative Fiscal Bureau

ISSUE

Shift Stewardship Debt Service to Forestry Account (DNR -- Forests and Parks)

[LFB Summary: Page 399, #1]

CURRENT LAW

Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Program

The statutes currently authorize $231 million in general obligation bonding authority for the stewardship program ($23.1 million beginning in 1990-91 and ending in 1999-2000). In addition, it is anticipated that DNR will also allocate $1.9 million annually of land acquisition funds from the federal government under the Land and Water Conservation Act, the Sport Fish Restoration Act and the Wildlife Restoration Act. In total, DNR is allowed to spend $25 million per year ($250 million over ten years) for the stewardship program. The following table provides a summary of the general fund supported borrowing authorized for the stewardship program. During the 1990-91 and 1991-92 fiscal years, the general land acquisition program was funded at a level of $8,600,000. In 1992-93, the urban rivers grant program was created at a level of $1,900,000 and the general land acquisition program was reduced to $6,700,000.

Annual Stewardship Bonding Authorization, 1992-93 through 1999-2000

Program	Amount
General Land Acquisition	$6,700,000
General Property Development	3,500,000
Local Park Aids	2,250,000
Lower Wisconsin State Riverway	2,000,000
Urban Rivers	1,900,000
Habitat Areas	1,500,000
Natural Areas Acquisition	1,500,000
Stream Bank Protection	1,000,000
Trails	1,000,000
Urban Green Spaces	750,000
Natural Areas Heritage Program	500,000
Ice Age Trail	500,000
TOTAL	$23,100,000

Forestry Account Revenue

The primary source of revenue deposited to the forestry account is the state tax on property of 0.2 mill (20¢ per $1,000 of property value, or $20 on a $100,000 property). Tax revenues may be used for the following purposes: (a) to acquire, preserve and develop the forests of the state; (b) to grow and plant trees; (c) to prevent and control forest and marsh fires; (d) to fund forest maintenance and improvement activities; (e) to fund forestry aid payments; and (f) for other forestry purposes. The tax is collected with other property taxes on a calendar-year basis and is calculated by using each county's total equalized property value, as determined by the Department of Revenue, for the previous year. The Wisconsin Constitution sets the maximum rate at 0.2 mill, with the actual rate set in statute.

Other sources of revenue to the forestry account include: (a) revenues from the sale of timber on state forest lands; (b) revenues from the sale of stock from the state's tree nurseries; (c) camping and entrance fees at state forests; (d) severance and withdrawal payments from timber harvests on cooperatively-managed county forests and on privately-owned land entered under the forest croplands and managed forest land programs; and (e) investment income derived from interest on forestry account balances.

GOVERNOR

Shift $8,000,000 in each year of GPR debt service to the forestry account of the conservation fund for the payment of principal and interest related to the acquisition and development of state forests and nurseries under the stewardship program. The appropriation for payments from the forestry account would be repealed on July 1, 1999.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson stewardship program was created in 1990 to acquire and develop land for recreational uses, wildlife habitat, fisheries, natural areas and other environmental and conservation purposes.

2. The Department of Natural Resources has identified $11.4 million in purchases made from the stewardship program for land acquisition and capital development of state forests and nurseries as of December 31, 1996. The Department of Administration estimates that a total of $30.4 million in past and future debt service will be paid between 1990-91 and 2015-16 relating to these purchases. Due to a calculation error, however, the total estimated past and future debt service costs for these purposes is approximately $19.0 million.

3. While the conservation fund has historically been used for land acquisition and development projects, SB 77 would be the first use of conservation fund revenues to pay for stewardship program debt service.

4. When the stewardship program was created, it was funded with general obligation bonds to reflect the statewide recreational, conservation and environmental benefits of land purchases that were envisioned under the program regardless of the particular location or purpose of the purchase. Therefore, general fund support for the program was deemed appropriate. Shifting some of the debt service for particular classes of purchases could be viewed as undermining the original intent of the stewardship program.

5. Since annual allocations from stewardship have typically not been fully expended each year, it is likely that some stewardship bonding authorization will likely be carried over after the end of the program in 1999-2000. Thus, debt service payments will continue to increase through at least 2000 as bonds related to stewardship continue to be issued and debt service costs will also be ongoing until at least 2021.

6. Therefore, although the shift of debt service costs from GPR to the forestry account recommended by the Governor is one-time, it could create a similar demand in future biennia. That is, total stewardship debt service is estimated at $9.1 million in 1997-98 and $9.2 million in 1998-99 ($1.1 million GPR and $8.0 million in forestry SEG in 1997-98 and $1.2 million GPR

and $8.0 million forestry SEG in 1998-99 under SB 77). However, the full $9.2 million, plus the cost of bonds issued during 1997-99 would be GPR funded beginning in 1999-2000.

7. In testimony before the Committee, the DNR Secretary stated that he believed it was legitimate to use forestry account monies to pay for stewardship debt service as long as the amount of funding used could be linked to forestry land purchases. While the $16 million under the bill ($8 million annually) represents about 85% of past, present and future payments for forestry purchases, the actual debt service associated with these purchases in 1997-99 would be less than $1 million annually.

8. Similarly, a number of other accounts in the conservation fund (such as the fish and wildlife account, the parks account, the endangered resources account, and the water resources account) could also be used to fund a portion of stewardship debt service as long as the funding could be linked to purchases consistent with the purposes of those accounts.

9. For example, a number of stewardship purchases have involved waters and facilities for recreational boating and thus could have a portion of the related debt service paid from the water resources account. Recreational boating may be most directly linked to two components of the stewardship program: (a) the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway ($7.6 million expended as of July 1, 1996), and (b) the urban rivers grant program ($2.3 million expended as of July 1, 1996). In addition, a variety of purchases involving stewardship funding provide recreational boating opportunities, including the Turtle Flambeau Flowage ($9.1 million in stewardship bonding).

10. The water resources account (motorboat gas tax) is estimated to have a balance of $2.3 million on June 30, 1999. Therefore, an additional $1,130,000 in 1997-98 and $1,188,000 in 1998-99 could be shifted from GPR debt service costs to the water resources account for the payment of principal and interest related to the acquisition and development of properties providing for recreational boating opportunities under the stewardship program. This would fully fund stewardship debt service from segregated funding in 1997-99.

11. Since the shift of GPR debt service to the forestry account recommended by the Governor would be for the 1997-99 biennium only, it could be argued it does not address the long-term condition of the general fund. To partially address this, stewardship bonding authority could be reduced by $1,500,000 annually beginning in 1998-99 (reducing general land acquisition by $1,125,000 and general property development by $375,000) and providing $1,500,000 from the forestry account on an ongoing basis beginning in 1998-99 for forestry-related land acquisition and capital development. This would reduce ongoing debt-service costs while still allowing the current level of forestry land acquisition and development. This would allow for a balance of somewhat less than $1.0 million in the forestry account on June 30, 1999.

12. The use of $16 million in forestry account revenues to pay for stewardship debt service could be an indication that an excess amount of revenue is being raised through the

forestry mill tax. Under the original DNR budget request, the forestry account would have had a projected balance of $21.3 million on June 30, 1999. The statutory rate of 0.2 per mill was established in 1937 and has not been changed since.

13. The Committee could decide to lower the mill tax rate beginning with taxes collected in calendar year 1999 (for fiscal year 1999-2000). This would not affect forestry account revenues in 1997-99.

14. Property values have increased at an average rate of 7.5% annually over the past five years. However, between calendar years 1985 and 1986, statewide property values declined, and property values increased an average of only 4% per year between calendar years 1986 and 1990. If the mill tax rate were lowered and revenues were unable to cover expenditures, a number of actions could be taken, including: (a) raising the mill tax rate (up to the 0.2 mill limit); (b) raising other fees such as admission and camping fees to increase non-mill-tax revenue; or (c) reducing Forestry's expenditures.

15. Assuming property values increase at approximately 5.0% per year after 1998 and both non-mill tax revenue and forestry expenditures increase at 3% per year, the mill tax rate could be reduced from 0.2 to 0.18 in calendar year 1999, resulting in a property tax reduction of $2 on a home valued at $100,000. The forestry account would be expected to have a balance of approximately $3.1 million at the end of the 1999-2001 biennium.

16. On the other hand, it could be argued that when the forestry account has a relatively large balance, it is legitimate to use the balance on a one-time basis for forestry-related purposes while preserving the tax rate necessary to fund ongoing, base forestry activities when assessments grow at a more modest rate.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

A. Stewardship Program

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to shift $8,000,000 GPR in each year of debt service costs to the forestry account for the payment of principal and interest related to the acquisition and development of state forests and nurseries under the stewardship program.

Alternative 1	GPR	SEG	TOTAL
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	- $16,000,000	$16,000,000	$0
[Change to Bill	*$0*	*$0*	*$0]*

2. In addition to Alternative 1, shift $1,130,000 in 1997-98 and $1,188,000 in 1998-99 from the water resources account for the payment of principal and interest related to the

acquisition and development of recreational boating-related properties under the stewardship program.

Alternative 2	GPR	SEG	TOTAL
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	- $2,318,000	$2,318,000	$0
[Change to Bill	*- $2,318,000*	*$2,318,000*	*$0]*

3. In addition to any of the above alternatives, reduce stewardship bonding authority by $3,000,000 ($1,500,000 allocated for 1998-99 and 1999-2000) and provide $1,500,000 in 1998-99 from the forestry account for forestry-related land acquisition and development.

Alternative 3	SEG	BR
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$1,500,000	- $3,000,000
[Change to Bill	*$1,500,000*	*- $3,000,000]*

4. Maintain current law.

Alternative 4	GPR	SEG	TOTAL
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$0	$0	0
[Change to Bill	*$16,000,000*	*- $16,000,000*	*$0]*

B. Forestry Mill Tax

1. Reduce the mill tax rate to 0.18 (18¢ per $1,000 of property value) beginning with the taxes paid on assessments made in calendar year 1999.

2. Maintain current law.

Prepared by: Russ Kava

MO# A2

2 BURKE	Y	N	A
1 DECKER	Y	N	A
GEORGE	Y	N	A
JAUCH	Y	N	A
WINEKE	Y	N	A
SHIBILSKI	Y	N	A
COWLES	Y	N	A
PANZER	Y	N	A
JENSEN	Y	N	A
OURADA	Y	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	N	A
ALBERS	Y	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	Y	N	A
LINTON	Y	N	A
COGGS	Y	N	A

AYE 6 NO 10 ABS ____

MO# Alt A1

2 BURKE	Y	N	A
1 DECKER	Y	N	A
GEORGE	Y	N	A
JAUCH	Y	N	A
WINEKE	Y	N	A
SHIBILSKI	Y	N	A
COWLES	Y	N	A
PANZER	Y	N	A
JENSEN	Y	N	A
OURADA	Y	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	N	A
ALBERS	Y	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	Y	N	A
LINTON	Y	N	A
COGGS	Y	N	A

AYE 15 NO 1 ABS 0

To: Joint Committee on Finance

From: Bob Lang, Director
Legislative Fiscal Bureau

ISSUE

Forest Landowner Grant Program (DNR -- Forests and Parks)

[LFB Summary: Page 399, #2]

CURRENT LAW

The Department of Natural Resources administers three programs designed to encourage landowners to manage private forest lands for timber production: (a) the forest croplands (FCL) program; (b) the woodland tax law program; and (c) the managed forest land (MFL) program. Land enrolled under these three programs is exempt from local property taxes. Instead, landowners make payments to towns or villages in amounts determined by the date the land is entered into these programs. The Department also distributes state aid to the towns and counties in which land entered under the forest cropland and managed forest program is located. This funding is provided from the forestry account of the conservation fund.

On January 1, 1986, new entries into the forest croplands and woodland tax law programs were eliminated, although existing contracts under the previous programs will remain in effect until their expiration. 1985 Act 29 created the managed forest land program to encourage the productive management of private forest lands. Under this program, although exempt from property taxes, landowners pay the town 85¢ per acre each year through 1997. In addition, if an additional $1.15 per acre is paid, a maximum of 80 contiguous acres may be closed to public access. The rates will be adjusted in 1997 and every fifth year thereafter using a formula that accounts for changes in the average statewide property tax. The Department pays towns and villages 20¢ for each acre designated under the program and 50% of the monies received by the Department from severance and withdrawal taxes paid by landowners. Similar to the forest croplands program, the town or village submits 20% of all moneys received under the program to the county treasury.

There is currently no provision for a state-level forest landowner grant program.

GOVERNOR

Provide $1,000,000 annually in a continuing appropriation from the forestry account to create a grant program for private forest landowners. DNR would provide grants for up to 50% of the costs for developing and implementing management plans for private forests that are not used for commercial timber production. Management plans would contain practices that emphasize the protection and enhancement of the natural resources on the forest land, including: (a) sustainable forestry; (b) soil and water quality; (c) endangered, threatened or rare forest communities; (d) the growth and maintenance of the forest; (e) habitat for fish and wildlife; and (f) the recreational, aesthetic and environmental benefits that the forest land provides. Require DNR to promulgate rules to implement the program.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Of the estimated 15.5 million acres of forest land in the state, 10.4 million acres (67%) are privately owned. There are approximately 225,000 private forest landowners in the state. As proposed in SB 77, grants would be awarded to landowners whose land is not used to "commercially" produce timber. Administration officials state that the intent was to exclude corporations whose stocks are publicly traded or legal entities principally engaged in the production of wood products from eligibility for this program. This would be consistent with DNR's "nonindustrial" private forest land definition, which includes rural land with existing tree cover or which is suitable for growing trees and owned by a private individual, group, or private legal entity. This would still allow landowners to undertake commercial harvest at some point, given that such harvests are typically a part of forest management plans.

2. Traditionally, private landowners have received federal forestry assistance from programs such as the Forest Incentive Program (FIP), the Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP), the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP) and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). While some of these programs have non-forestry components, they also provide funding for forestry practices, including: (a) improvement of the management of nonindustrial private forest land; (b) increasing the production of timber; (c) improvement of stand productivity; and (d) reforestation.

3. The cost-share funding available to private landowners from these programs has been declining, as indicated in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Federal Cost-Share Funding for Forestry Practices

Program	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Forestry Incentives (FIP)	$166,000	$185,000	$168,000	$146,000	$60,000
Agricultural Conservation (ACP)	614,000	495,000	574,000	476,000	225,000
Stewardship Incentives (SIP)	732,000	658,000	637,000	538,000	50,000
Conservation Reserve (CRP)	937,000	766,000	687,000	291,000	297,000
Total	$2,449,000	$2,104,000	$2,066,000	$1,451,000	$632,000

4. Based on experience with these federal assistance programs, funding for the proposed landowner grant program would likely be used for the following activities similar to the proportions indicated in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Estimated Use of Proposed Grant Program Funding

Activity	Estimated Percent
Tree and Shrub Planting	45%
Water Control Structures	15
Grass Planting	15
Habitat Modification	15
Fencing	10
Total	100%

5. Since grants could be designated for tree planting activities, it could be argued that the state would be subsidizing future timber harvests by the private forest landowners. The state would not share directly in any revenues from future timber harvests. Further, there would be no guarantee of public access on the land for which a grant is received, unlike certain land entered under forest tax law programs.

6. It could be argued that there is a public benefit to the state in encouraging tree planting, such as the environmental, wildlife and recreational benefits of forest land and the jobs created in the forest, pulp and printing industries. Further, it could be argued the state benefits through increased tax collections as a result of a healthy forest industry.

7. In addition, the planting of trees would have no immediate economic benefit to the private landowner. Any timber harvests would occur well into the future, yielding no immediate economic gain for the landowners. It could be argued that during the interim, the public would benefit from the improved stewardship of forest lands regardless of any eventual private gain for the landowners.

8. Some of the private landowners who would be eligible for these grants already participate in FCL or MFL. DNR program staff estimate that there could be a 30 to 40 percent overlap between participants in the forest tax law programs and the proposed private landowner grant programs. DNR surveys show that landowners most often choose not to participate in the forest tax programs because: (a) they do not want others involved in decisions about their property; (b) they do not know enough about program details; (c) they do not want to allow public access to their property; (d) they do not want to commit to a multi-year contract; or (e) they do not consider the financial benefits of the program sufficient. The statutes also set a minimum acreage requirement of 10 contiguous acres for MFL eligibility. The bill could benefit those landowners who do not participate in forest tax law programs.

9. Those landowners who have already completed a management plan under FCL or MFL would be eligible for implementation funding (of up to 50%) under the bill. Those landowners who have not completed a management plan would be able to receive funding for both plan development and implementation.

10. It could be argued that the state has already made a substantial financial commitment to private forest management through the forest tax law program (approximately $1.6 million in 1995-96 from the forestry account). Further, landowners in these programs benefit from substantial property tax reductions. The funding for the proposed grant program could be limited to those landowners who do not participate in forest tax law programs with the overall funding level reduced as well.

11. On the other hand, once the management plans done under the forest tax law programs have been completed, the state does not provide funding for the implementation of the provisions of the plan. SB 77 would allow for management practices to be implemented that may not otherwise occur.

12. DNR program staff indicate several issues related to the proposed grant program will be dealt with as part of the rule-making process under the bill, including: (a) priority distribution of grant funding; (b) maximum grant levels; and (c) eligibility limitations based on the number of acres owned.

13. Priority distribution. Grants would likely be distributed on a priority system to determine which of the proposed statutory purposes would receive the most emphasis in the program.

14. Maximum grant levels. DNR program staff indicate that a maximum grant level would be set in the rule making process. Using the federal programs as a guide, staff indicate that level would likely be set at between $3,000 and $5,000 per landowner.

15. Acres of land owned. DNR program staff indicate that the program would likely be limited to landowners who own less than 1,000 acres of land, although they indicate most grants would go to forest landowners with 40 to 100 acres of land. Approximately 92% of private nonindustrial forest landowners in the state hold less than 100 acres of land.

16. The proposed grant program would most likely be administered by the Division of Customer Assistance and External Relations. As part of departmental reorganization, a total of 0.8 positions would be transferred from Forestry to Community Financial Assistance. This transfer is intended to reflect only the aids administration related to existing forestry programs and does not take into account any workload related to this program or the local fire department equipment assistance grant program included in SB 77.

17. No additional positions were recommended by the Governor for the administration of this grant program. Given the additional workload this program would create (approximately 250 grants annually), the Committee could provide a half-time community services specialist position for this purpose, or, alternately, transfer a vacant 0.5 position from Forestry to Community Financial Assistance for the administration of the program.

18. SB 77 would require DNR to promulgate rules to implement the program, which typically take approximately six to 12 months to develop. Given the need to promulgate rules, it is uncertain whether the Department would be able to implement the program in the first year of the biennium. SB 77 would create a continuing appropriation for the grant program, with any unspent amount at the end of one fiscal year carrying over into the next year. DNR program staff indicate that they would likely distribute $1,000,000 annually in grants given their experience with the federal grant programs, lessening the probability of large balances being carried over on a yearly basis (at least after the initial year). An annual appropriation could be created instead, meaning any unspent funds at the end of a year would revert to the forestry account. A biennial appropriation would allow the funds to be expended in either year, while still lapsing unspent amounts to the forestry account at the end of each biennium. Finally, the Committee could consider deleting the funding for the program in 1997-98 given that it is unlikely funding could be utilized much before July of 1998.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

A. Funding

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide $1,000,000 annually from the forestry account to create a grant program, as technically corrected, for nonindustrial private

forest landowners. Provide grants for up to 50% of the costs for developing and implementing management plans for private forests that are not used for commercial timber production. Require DNR to promulgate rules to implement the program.

Alternative A1	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$2,000,000
[Change to Bill	*$0]*

2. Modify the Governor's recommendation to provide $1,000,000 in 1998-99 from the forestry account to create a grant program, as technically corrected, for nonindustrial private forest landowners.

Alternative A2	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$1,000,000
[Change to Bill	*- $1,000,000]*

3. Modify the Governor's recommendation by restricting eligibility for the proposed forest landowner grant program to those landowners not participating in a forest tax law program (FCL, MFL or woodland tax law) and providing $650,000 annually.

Alternative A3	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$1,300,000
[Change to Bill	*- $700,000]*

4. Modify the Governor's recommendation by restricting eligibility for the proposed forest landowner grant program to those landowners not participating in a forest tax law program and providing $650,000 in 1998-99 only.

Alternative A4	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$650,000
[Change to Bill	*- $1,350,000*

5. Maintain current law.

Alternative A5	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$0
[Change to Bill	*- $2,000,000]*

B. Appropriation

1. As recommended by the Governor, create a continuing appropriation for the grant program.

2. Create a biennial appropriation.

3. Create an annual appropriation.

C. Positions

1. Provide $18,600 in 1997-98 and $24,200 in 1998-99 from the forestry account for a 0.5 community services specialist position in Community Financial Assistance to administer the grant program.

Alternative C1	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$42,800
[Change to Bill	*$42,800]*
1998-99 POSITIONS (Change to Base)	0.50
[Change to Bill	*0.50]*

2. Provide $24,200 in 1998-99 for a community services specialist position.

Alternative C2	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$24,200
[Change to Bill	*$24,200]*
1998-99 POSITIONS (Change to Base)	0.50
[Change to Bill	*0.50]*

3. Transfer a vacant 0.5 position from Forestry to Community Financial Assistance to administer the grant program.

4. Maintain current law.

Prepared by: Russ Kava

MO# A1

2 BURKE	Y	N	A
1 DECKER	Y	N	A
GEORGE	Y	N	A
JAUCH	Y	N	A
WINEKE	Y	N	A
SHIBILSKI	Y	N	A
COWLES	Y	N	A
PANZER	Y	N	A
JENSEN	Y	N	A
OURADA	Y	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	N	A
ALBERS	Y	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	Y	N	A
LINTON	Y	N	A
COGGS	Y	N	A

AYE 13 NO 3 ABS 0

MO# B2 C3

2 BURKE	Y	N	A
1 DECKER	Y	N	A
GEORGE	Y	N	A
JAUCH	Y	N	A
WINEKE	Y	N	A
SHIBILSKI	Y	N	A
COWLES	Y	N	A
PANZER	Y	N	A
JENSEN	Y	N	A
OURADA	Y	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	N	A
ALBERS	Y	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	Y	N	A
LINTON	Y	N	A
COGGS	Y	N	A

AYE 16 NO 0 ABS 0

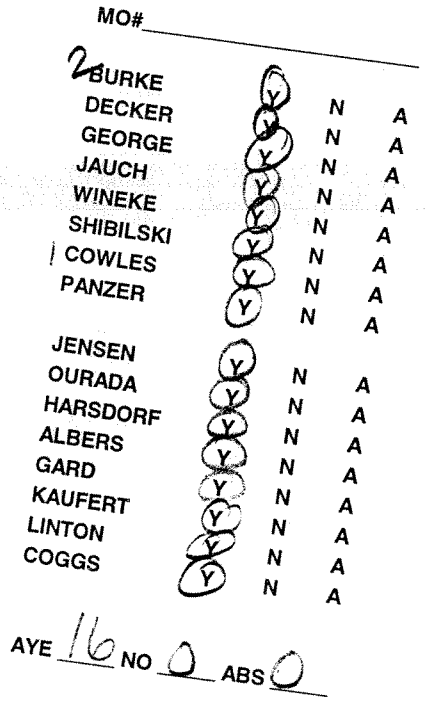
Senator Cowles

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Landowner Grant Program
(Paper #581)

Motion:

Move to limit program eligibility to landowners with 500 acres or less of nonindustrial private forest land.



Motion #1556

Representative Ourada

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Private Forest Landowner Grant Program (Paper #581)

Motion:

Move to modify the private forest landowner grant program as follows.

(a) Define "nonindustrial private forest land" as rural lands with existing tree cover or which are suitable for growing trees.

(b) Define "forest stewardship management plan" as the plan describing forest stewardship measures to be used on a particular site to achieve multiple natural resource goals.

(c) Clarify that the program is to award grants for developing and implementing practices contained in forest stewardship management plans.

(d) Limit eligibility to owners of less than ~~1,000~~ 500 acres of nonindustrial private forest land.

(e) Require each landowner receiving a grant to contribute a percentage of eligible costs as determined by the department (rather than matching funds equal to the amount of the grant).

(f) Require that a management plan meet minimum standards established by DNR for forest stewardship management plans (rather than contain practices that will protect and enhance the natural resources on the forest land).

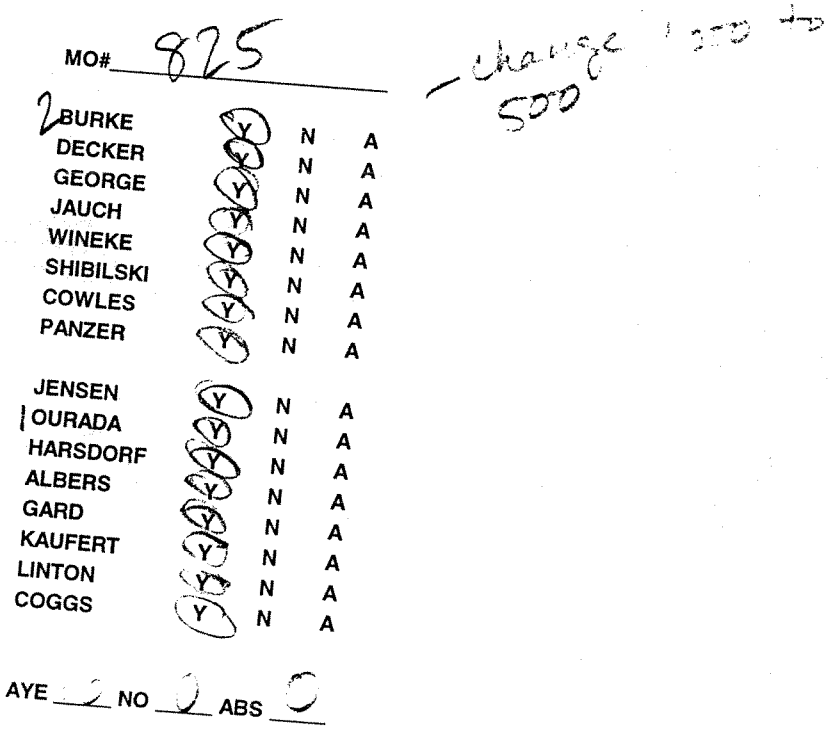
(g) Substitute "sustainable forestry" for "the growth and maintenance of the forest" on the list of practices eligible for funding under the program.

(h) Grant emergency rule-making authority without the finding of an emergency for DNR to promulgate rules to implement the grant program.

Note:

This motion would make several changes to the private forest landowner grant program. Items (a) and (b) would add definitions for the program consistent with other DNR programs. Item (c) would allow grants to be used to implement practices identified in plans rather than the entire plan. Item (e) would allow DNR to set the landowner contribution and recognize in-kind contributions from landowners.

Granting the Department emergency rule-making authority would more easily allow the Department to implement the program in the first year of the biennium. However, it would also limit legislative and public input into the development of the rules.



To: Joint Committee on Finance

From: Bob Lang, Director
Legislative Fiscal Bureau

ISSUE

Local Fire Department Equipment Assistance Grants (DNR -- Forests and Parks)

[LFB Summary: Page 399, #3]

CURRENT LAW

DNR has statutory authority and jurisdiction in all matters relating to the prevention, detection and suppression of forest and grassland fires outside the limits of incorporated villages and cities in the state. The Department also has the statutory authority to enter into agreements with municipal boards, county boards, individuals and associations for the purpose of improving protection against forest fires.

GOVERNOR

Provide $610,000 on a one-time basis in the 1997-99 biennium from the forestry account of the conservation fund to assist local fire departments in forest fire suppression. Create an equipment cost-share grant program to provide grants of up to 50% for local fire departments to purchase fire resistant clothing and fire suppression supplies, equipment and vehicles ($525,000 annually). Funds would be made available to cities, villages, towns, counties and fire suppression organizations who agree to assist the Department in the suppression of forest fires. Require DNR to promulgate rules establishing criteria and procedures for awarding grants under this section. Also provide $85,000 annually in one-time funding in the 1997-99 biennium, to purchase fire-resistant coveralls for localities and organizations that enter into such an agreement with DNR.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. One of the recommendations of the Department's May, 1994, Forest Fire Control Study which was approved by the DNR Secretary and the Natural Resources Board was to expand the use of the approximately 840 local fire departments in the state to strengthen initial fire attack and suppression capabilities. The study group that issued the report recommended that: (a) local fire departments be allowed the option of making the initial attack on forest fires within their jurisdiction; and (b) DNR assist local fire departments in acquiring fire suppression equipment and providing fire suppression training.

2. The Bureau of Forestry is conducting a pilot project in the Lake Michigan District. Beginning in 1995, 74 fire departments in the district signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Department to assist in fighting forest fires. DNR conducted forest fire suppression training with those departments (a six to eight hour course for at least six firefighters from each department) and the departments were given six sets of Nomex coveralls (lightweight, fire-resistant coveralls more suitable for forest fires than the heavier gear worn for structural fires).

3. As part of the standard MOU signed under the pilot project, DNR explicitly maintains its statutory responsibility for the suppression of forest and grassland fires. The DNR, as part of the agreement, is able to request the assistance of local fire department personnel and equipment. The local department is responsible for structural and vehicular fires, with local departments able to request the assistance of DNR equipment and personnel. The local department and DNR make every effort to notify each other of forest fires. If a local fire department is the first to arrive at the scene of the forest fire, it begins the initial attack. DNR and the local department agree on a list of fire fighting units suitable for suppressing forest fires, and the local departments respond to forest fires with units who have completed the fire training course.

4. In a survey of firefighters involved in the training course in the pilot (581 respondents), over 90% found the information presented in the training course to be very or somewhat useful, felt the level of instruction was appropriate and found the teaching methods used to be outstanding or good.

5. In a survey of fire departments given the option of signing an MOU (45 respondents), 95% of departments that responded to forest fires in 1996 did not modify their overall response to the fire based on the agreement. The same percentage felt DNR met the obligations outlined in the MOU. Of those that signed the MOU, 36% indicated that they intended to purchase specialized equipment or vehicles in order to meet the terms of the agreement. Nearly 98% indicated they would sign an MOU with DNR again if the project were extended or made permanent.

6. In a survey of DNR personnel involved in the pilot (14 responses), 54% indicated that the pilot increased efficiency by coordinating suppression efforts between the Department and fire departments. Over 90% indicated that they did not notice a modified response to fires on the part of local departments as a result of the pilot, and 75% indicated they did not feel that DNR modified their response as a result of the pilot. Over 90% felt that local fire department suppression efforts were adequate, and 83% recommended continuing the pilot or extending it to other parts of the state.

7. The Department indicates that the creation of this grant program would not be used to reduce its own statewide fire fighting capability. DNR's statutory responsibility for the prevention, detection and suppression of forest fires would not be changed. If a local fire department is unable to contain the fire, the Department would still be responsible for the suppression of the fire. Department staff indicate that this program would be a way to formally clarify and strengthen the relationships between DNR and local fire departments, better utilize available resources and increase efficiency in fire protection (that is, potentially decrease response time and reduce damage from wild fires).

8. DNR program staff indicate that the need for financial assistance for these purposes is demonstrated by the shortfall between annual requests by fire departments for federal Rural Community Fire Protection (RCFP) program grants and the RCFP funding available, as shown in the table below.

Rural Community Fire Protection Grants

Year	Departments Requesting Grants	Funding Requested	Funding Available
1992	352	$1,380,300	$84,500
1993	303	1,022,100	85,000
1994	316	1,259,600	82,300
1995	326	1,154,000	80,700
1996	280	658,800	51,600

9. While there is overlap between the RCFP and the proposed local fire department equipment assistance grants, there are some differences. The proposed state program, for example, would be specifically tied to forest fire protection through the signing of a MOU with DNR. The RCFP, however, applies more broadly to rural fire fighting, including structural fires and fires threatening farmlands, pastures, orchards, or rangeland.

10. The Department has proposed that the cost-share grant program be a demonstration project for 1997-99, with evaluation to determine whether to continue the grants into 1999-2001. Although SB 77 would not provide ongoing funding beyond 1998-99, neither the appropriation

nor the program criteria are sunset. This could create the expectation of continued grants among local fire departments.

11. The Nomex coveralls are provided to communities upon signing the MOU with DNR as a way to ensure that local fire fighters have the protective clothing necessary to safely fulfill the responsibilities they are assigned as part of the agreement. DNR program staff indicate that smaller communities and volunteer fire departments generally do not have the resources to purchase such coveralls. In addition, the need for such coveralls might be minimal for those fire departments where the emphasis is on fighting structural fires as opposed to forest fires.

12. The $170,000 recommended by the Governor for Nomex coveralls in the biennium would provide six sets of clothing to 284 departments (about one-third of the 840 departments in the state). Fire departments that received coveralls as part of the Lake Michigan District pilot would not receive another set as part of the expanded program.

13. It could be argued that DNR training and Nomex clothing would be sufficient incentive for local fire departments to enter into these agreements. That is, an equipment grant program might not be necessary since most fire departments in the pilot were already responding to DNR fire calls and DNR units currently assist local fire departments when needed. Alternatively, the Committee could fund the grant program at a lower level than that recommended by the Governor.

14. Conversely, the grant program could address the needs of those local fire departments (approximately one-third of those that participated in the pilot) that identified a need to purchase specialized equipment to fully carry out the agreement. Program staff also indicate that DNR and local fire departments had good cooperation levels prior to the pilot in the Lake Michigan district, but that further incentive for cooperation might be necessary if the program were to expand.

15. DNR program staff indicate several issues related to the proposed grant program will be dealt with as part of the rule-making process, including: (a) priority distribution of grant funding; (b) maximum grant levels; and (c) purchases eligible for grant funding.

16. Priority distribution. Grants would likely be distributed on a priority basis statewide based on the levels of protection established as part of DNR's Forest Fire Control Study. That study established five levels of forest fire protection at the township level based on the type of trees prevalent, fire history and the number of developed parcels. A Level 1 township, for example, has a large acreage of pine, while a Level 5 township contains mostly marshlands, grasslands and other agricultural land.

17. Maximum grant levels. The Department indicates that a maximum grant level would be set depending on the type of purchase being made. DNR program staff indicate a preference for setting this limit in rule to allow for greater flexibility to change the level to meet

future changes in community supply and equipment needs. Under the RCFP, for example, a fire department can receive a maximum grant of $1,500, while a county fire association can receive a maximum grant of $3,000. Under these criteria, DNR could award at least 175 to 350 grants each year.

18. Eligible purchases. The intent of the program is for the purchase of communications equipment (such as radios, repeater towers, base stations), protective clothing and foam fire suppression equipment and the development of rural mapping capabilities (through GIS capability, for example). DNR considers the funding of smaller fire tools (such as shovels and axes) a local responsibility for general fire fighting purposes and indicates that such purchases would probably not be eligible for grant funding.

19. The proposed grant program would most likely be administered by the Division of Customer Assistance and External Relations. As part of departmental reorganization, a total of 0.8 positions would be transferred from Forestry to Community Financial Assistance. This transfer is intended to reflect only the aids administration related to existing forestry programs and does not take into account any workload related to this program or the private forest landowner grant program included in SB 77.

20. No additional positions were recommended by the Governor for the administration of this proposed grant program. Given the additional workload this program would create (perhaps 175 to 300 grants annually), the Committee could provide a half-time community services specialist position (on a two-year project basis) in the Bureau of Community Financial Assistance. Alternatively, the Committee could transfer a vacant 0.5 position from Forestry to Community Financial Assistance for the administration of the program.

21. Under SB 77, the Department would promulgate rules to implement the grant program and to define "fire suppression organizations" that would be eligible for grants. (DNR indicates these organizations would be public entities such as a county-wide fire fighting association.) Development of rules would likely require six to 12 months after enactment. Given the need to promulgate rules, it is uncertain whether the Department would be able to implement the program in the first year of the biennium. Thus, the Committee could delete the funding for 1997-98 ($610,000 would be provided in 1998-99 only). Future funding for the program could be considered in the 1999-2001 budget.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

A. Funding

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide $610,000 in each year in one-time funding from the forestry account of the conservation fund for grants and equipment for local fire departments and fire suppression organizations who agree to assist DNR as follows: (a)

provide a grant of up to 50% to purchase fire resistant clothing and fire suppression supplies, equipment and vehicles ($525,000 annually); and (b) provide fire-resistant coveralls ($85,000 annually). Require DNR to promulgate rules to implement the program.

Alternative A1	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$1,220,000
[Change to Bill	*$0]*

2. Modify the Governor's recommendation to provide $610,000 in 1998-99 only.

Alternative A2	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$610,000
[Change to Bill	*- $610,000]*

3. Modify the Governor's recommendation to provide $85,000 in each year to purchase fire-resistant coveralls.

Alternative A3	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$170,000
[Change to Bill	*- $1,050,000]*

4. Modify the Governor's recommendation to provide $85,000 in 1998-99 only to purchase fire-resistant coveralls.

Alternative A4	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$85,000
[Change to Bill	*- $1,135,000]*

5. Modify the Governor's recommendation to provide $285,000 in each year as follows: (a) $200,000 to provide grants for equipment and vehicles; and (b) $85,000 to provide fire-resistant coveralls.

Alternative A5	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$570,000
[Change to Bill	*- $650,000]*

6. Modify the Governor's recommendation to provide $285,000 in 1998-99 only as follows: (a) $200,000 to provide grants for equipment and vehicles; and (b) $85,000 to provide fire-resistant coveralls.

Alternative A6	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$285,000
[Change to Bill	*- $935,000*

7. Maintain current law.

Alternative A7	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$0
[Change to Bill	*- $1,220,000]*

B. Positions

1. Provide $18,600 in 1997-98 and $24,200 in 1998-99 from the forestry account for a half-time community services specialist two-year project position in Community Financial Assistance to administer the grant program.

Alternative B1	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$42,800
[Change to Bill	*$42,800]*
1998-99 POSITIONS (Change to Base)	0.50
[Change to Bill	*0.50]*

2. Provide $24,200 in 1998-99 for a one-year project position.

Alternative B2	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$24,200
[Change to Bill	*$24,200]*
1997-99 POSITIONS (Change to Base)	0.50
[Change to Bill	*0.50]*

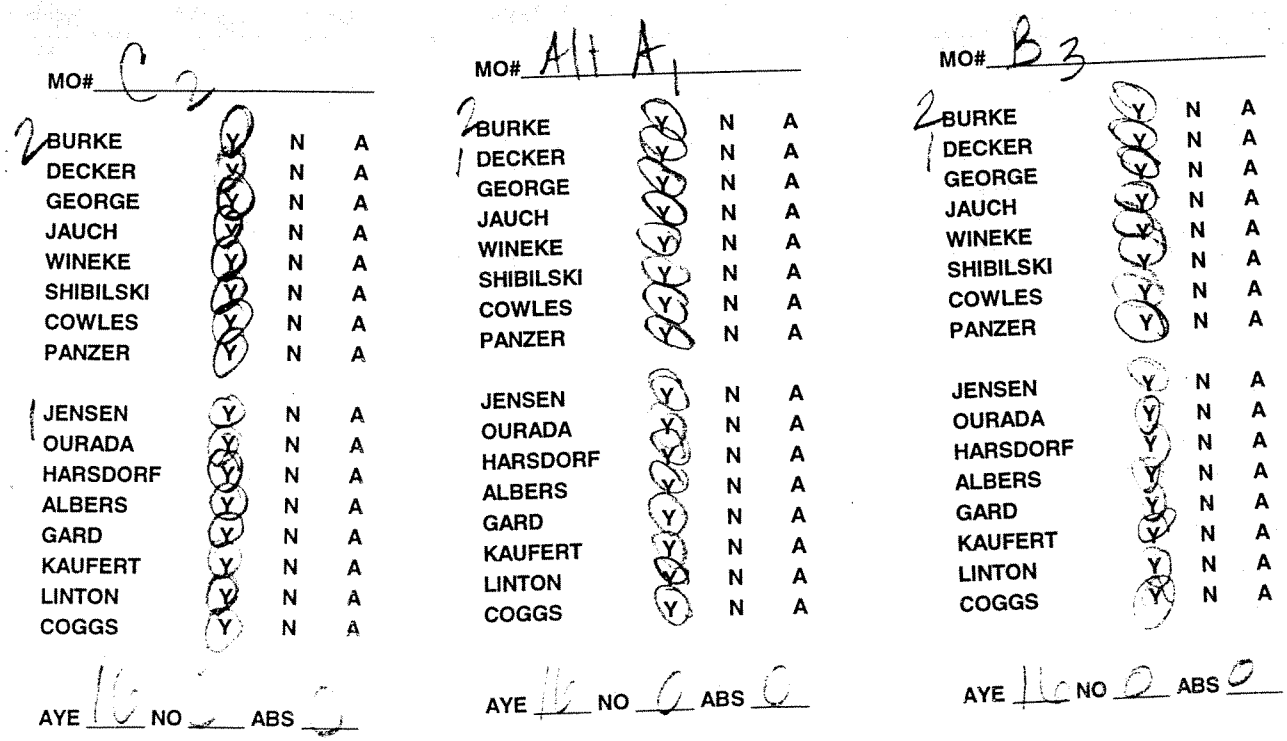
3. Transfer a half-time position from Forestry to Community Financial Assistance to administer the grant program.

4 Maintain current law.

C. Sunset

1. As recommended by the Governor, budget the funding as one-time.

2. In addition to the Governor's recommendation, sunset the program authorization on June 30, 1999.



Representative Ourada

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Fire Department Equipment Grant Program (Paper #582)

Motion:

Move to modify the local fire department equipment assistance grant program as follows.

(a) Clarify that a local fire department would have to enter into a written agreement with DNR to assist DNR in the suppression of forest fires at DNR's request to be eligible for a grant.

(b) Grant emergency rule-making authority without the finding of an emergency for DNR to promulgate rules to implement the grant program.

Note:

Granting the Department emergency rule-making authority would more easily allow the Department to implement the program in the first year of the biennium. However, it would also limit legislative and public input into the development of the rules.

MO# 835

2 BURKE	Y	N	A
DECKER	Y	N	A
GEORGE	Y	N	A
JAUCH	Y	N	A
WINEKE	Y	N	A
SHIBILSKI	Y	N	A
COWLES	Y	N	A
PANZER	Y	N	A
JENSEN	Y	N	A
1 OURADA	Y	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	N	A
ALBERS	Y	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	Y	N	A
LINTON	Y	N	A
COGGS	Y	N	A

AYE 12 NO 0 ABS 0

Motion #835

To: Joint Committee on Finance

From: Bob Lang, Director
Legislative Fiscal Bureau

ISSUE

Highway Landscaping Initiative (DNR -- Forests and Parks)

[LFB Summary: Page 400, #6]

CURRENT LAW

The Department of Transportation funds highway landscaping projects as part of the state highway rehabilitation program. Funding for these projects was reduced by $1.8 million annually in the 1995-97 biennial budget. DOT officials estimate that approximately $1 million annually is currently spent on highway landscaping.

GOVERNOR

Provide $500,000 annually in unalloted reserve from the forestry account of the conservation fund for contracts with the Department of Corrections and the Wisconsin Conservation Corps for landscaping activities along state highways. Release of the funds would be contingent on the development of a work plan by DNR and DOT to be submitted to DOA by January 1, 1998, for its approval. The plan would: (a) give priority to landscaping highways in counties including and south of a line from Manitowoc to LaCrosse Counties; and (b) require at least 50% of the funds to be used for Corrections inmate work crews.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Administration officials indicate that the purpose of this proposal is to: (a) help tourism in the state by beautifying the highways for travellers driving through southern Wisconsin; and (b) help direct forestry account revenue to the southern part of the state.

2. In testimony before the Committee, the DNR Secretary indicated that the funding for the initiative would be used as part of a reforestation effort. The DOT Secretary, on the other hand, stated his intentions for the money to be used for highway beautification that generally would not include trees, but rather shrubs and grasses.

3. It could be argued that the proposed use of the funding for "landscaping" as provided in SB 77 is unclear and that the Committee could clarify how any funds provided should be spent.

4. DNR staff indicate it is typically desirable to plant vegetation similar to that which is already prominent in the area. For example, if a project were undertaken in prairie lands, grasses and shrubs would be planted. If a project were undertaken in an area that is predominantly pine or hardwoods, trees would likely be used.

5. DOT indicates that its planting program is prioritized among four purposes: (a) revegetation of surrounding land after road construction; (b) planting to enhance safety, such as planting in the median of a highway to reduce the glare from the headlights of oncoming cars; (c) "good neighbor" planting, such as planting vegetation between a newly-relocated road and a residential property that had previously been secluded from a roadway; and (d) planting for enhancement or beautification.

6. Thus, the Committee could require that funding for the landscaping initiative be spent in accordance with DOT priorities and consistent with the natural vegetation in an area in which planting is done.

7. Use of large stock trees for this initiative could present problems in terms of providing excess shading over roads and thus inhibiting snow melt. In addition, certain species of trees could be damaged by the salt used by highway crews during winter. Overall, planting large trees would also be more expensive than planting grasses and shrubs. The initiative could be restricted to the planting of only grasses and shrubs so as to maximize the area that could be landscaped and minimize safety concerns. However, the use of the forestry account funds for landscaping when trees are excluded could be questioned.

8. Assuming trees are planted beyond the 30-foot safety zone traditionally recognized by DOT, it is not likely that trees would become a future safety concern. Further, since the forestry account would be the source of funding for the project, it could be argued that reforestation should be the focus of the program and that forestry SEG should not be spent to primarily plant grasses and shrubs. DNR believes that if the landscaping initiative were limited to only trees, there would be sufficient tree planting opportunities in southern Wisconsin for the funding recommended (such as in the Baraboo Hills area).

9. As proposed in SB 77, at least $250,000 annually (one-half of available funding) would be used to reimburse the Department of Corrections for the use of inmate work crews.

It is not clear whether this includes only direct labor costs or also materials (trees, grasses and shrubs). DNR indicates that landscaping is often more supply-intensive than labor-intensive. It could be argued that the requirement that 50% of funding go to DOC inmate crews is too restrictive and should be removed.

10. Corrections officials indicate that inmate idleness is a significant concern given growing prison populations and limited prison space. DOC has not yet determined, however, how many inmates will be assigned to each crew or how funding provided under the bill will be utilized.

11. Alternately, some believe it is not appropriate to use prisoners to do work which could otherwise be done by private landscapers or by WCC work crews. The Committee could choose to prohibit any money from being used for Corrections inmate crews and instead allow DNR and DOT to contract with either the WCC or with private landscapers to complete the planting.

12. Given uncertainty over how the funds will be spent or for what projects, the Committee could delete the funding for this initiative and require DNR, DOT, DOC and WCC to report to Joint Finance on a uniform plan to expend forestry account revenue for highway landscaping. The report and any proposed funding could be considered under the s. 13.10 process.

13. The SB 77 landscaping initiative would use forestry account funds to subsidize those activities traditionally funded from the transportation fund. This shift could be viewed as inconsistent with the purpose of the forestry account to improve the forests of the state. If the Governor's recommendation were not adopted, highway landscaping would continue to be funded from the transportation fund.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide $500,000 annually in unalloted reserve from the forestry account for landscaping activities along state highways. Release of the funds would be contingent on the development of a work plan by DNR and DOT to be submitted to DOA by January 1, 1998, for its approval.

Alternative 1	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$1,000,000
[Change to Bill	*$0]*

2. In addition to Alternative 1, do one or more of the following:

a. Require that the landscaping be consistent with DOT planting program priorities and in accordance with the natural vegetation present in the area in which any planting is done.

b. Require that the landscaping be limited to grasses and shrubs.

c. Require that the landscaping be limited to trees.

d. As recommended by the Governor, require that 50% of the funding for the highway project be spent on DOC inmate crews and allow the use of WCC work crews.

e. Allow the use of DOC inmate crews and WCC work crews.

f. Prohibit the use of DOC inmate crews, but allow the use of WCC work crews.

g. Allow the use of private landscapers.

h. As recommended by the Governor, give priority to landscaping highways in counties including and south of a line from Manitowoc to LaCrosse Counties.

3. Do not adopt the Governor's recommendation. Rather, require DNR, DOT, DOC and WCC to report to Joint Finance on a uniform plan for highway landscaping and to request any funding necessary under s. 13.10.

Alternative 3	**SEG**
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$0
[Change to Bill	*- $1,000,000]*

4. Maintain current law.

Alternative 4	**SEG**
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$0
[Change to Bill	*- $1,000,000]*

MO#_____

BURKE	Y	N	A
DECKER	Y	N	A
GEORGE	Y	N	A
JAUCH	Y	N	A
WINEKE	Y	N	A
SHIBILSKI	Y	N	A
COWLES	Y	N	A
PANZER	Y	N	A
JENSEN	Y	N	A
OURADA	Y	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	N	A
ALBERS	Y	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	Y	N	A
LINTON	Y	N	A
COGGS	Y	N	A

ıss Kava

AYE _____ NO _____ ABS _____

To: Joint Committee on Finance

From: Bob Lang, Director
Legislative Fiscal Bureau

ISSUE

Forest Landscape Ecology Research (DNR -- Forests and Parks)

[LFB Summary: Page 402, #11]

CURRENT LAW

Under a cooperative agreement signed between the Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University created a faculty position in the Department of Forestry in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences for a forest landscape ecologist position. The University also provides office and lab space, network access and clerical support for the position. DNR pays salary and fringe benefits to the University for the position.

The University and DNR work together with the ecologist to develop an annual work plan, which includes: (a) the research project objectives, cost and duration; (b) expected teaching workload; (c) time anticipated for consulting with DNR personnel on forest research issues; and (d) any other duties anticipated. If there is any disagreement on the work plan, the UW Department of Forestry, the DNR Bureaus of Forestry and Integrated Science Services and the ecologist meet to resolve the issue.

The Department and the University entered into the current contract in September, 1996. The incumbent in the ecologist position is on leave from his position as a research scientist in DNR. Funding for the position for 1996-97 is from federal grant money which paid the ecologist's salary at DNR.

GOVERNOR

Provide $80,000 annually from the forestry account of the conservation fund for the Department of Natural Resources to contract with the University of Wisconsin-Madison for a cooperative forest landscape ecology position to assist in the implementation of ecosystem management in state forests.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Landscape ecology is the science of ecological interactions at a regional scale. Managing natural resources on the regional level is one of the goals of the Department's reorganization.

2. The primary focus of the ecologist is research. Under the current work plan, the ecologist is involved in projects relating to the ecological differences between old growth and managed forests, reconstruction of presettlement forest landscapes, sustainable forest management, the effects of forest change on various species and other forestry topics. The ecologist also teaches one graduate seminar per year and co-teaches an advanced forest ecology course every other year.

3. Organizationally, the forest landscape ecologist reports to the chair of the UW Department of Forestry. On a day-to-day basis, however, the ecologist works closely with DNR research staff on various projects. All parties indicate that the current arrangement has worked well over the past year, with no tensions between University and DNR priorities.

4. The Department indicates that this collaborative arrangement would benefit both the DNR and the University by: (a) allowing better leverage of grant monies; (b) allowing better leverage of geographic information systems (GIS) resources; and (c) facilitating communication between academia and state agencies.

5. Grant monies. Some forestry-related grant funding is available to either the University (such as federal McIntire-Stennis) or to DNR (such as Partnerships for Wildlife) but not both. A cooperative arrangement between the two would allow for the combining of grant dollars from these various sources for projects.

6. GIS resources. Landscape ecology requires the use of costly GIS equipment. Greater coordination in the use of this GIS equipment, GIS trained staff and GIS data layers could benefit both the University and the Department.

7. Communication between academia and agencies. The Department indicates that having the ecologist working with other University scientists will provide access to other areas of expertise the Department might not otherwise have. In addition, having the ecologist work

with DNR on research priorities could help steer University research toward those priorities identified by government agencies. As part of this agreement, graduate students would also be able to work as research assistants on projects identified as a priority by DNR.

8. Such an arrangement between the University and other state agencies is not unprecedented. Also, a similar cooperative approach has been established between the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Michigan State University to provide for natural resources research in the university setting through positions funded by the Michigan DNR.

9. Because landscape ecology is a relatively new discipline, the Department indicates there are few experienced landscape ecologists in the country. This could make it more critical for the Department to retain the current landscape ecologist in the state to do research related to Wisconsin forests.

10. Under SB 77, the position from which the landscape ecologist is on leave would become vacant, allowing DNR to hire another research scientist. The Bureaus of Forestry and Integrated Science Services have agreed that any research scientist hired would be for forestry research. The Department indicates that this scientist position would be able to coordinate projects with the landscape ecologist at the University and carry out additional forest-related research from within the Department.

11. The Committee could choose instead to delete the vacant FED position. The Department could then reallocate funding from within the Bureau of Integrated Science Services for the UW-Madison contract. This would allow the Department to maintain the same research workload as under current law rather than allow for another position in the Department to carry out additional forestry research.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide $80,000 annually from the forestry account for DNR to contract with the University of Wisconsin-Madison for a cooperative forest landscape ecology position.

Alternative 1	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$160,000
[Change to Bill	*$0]*

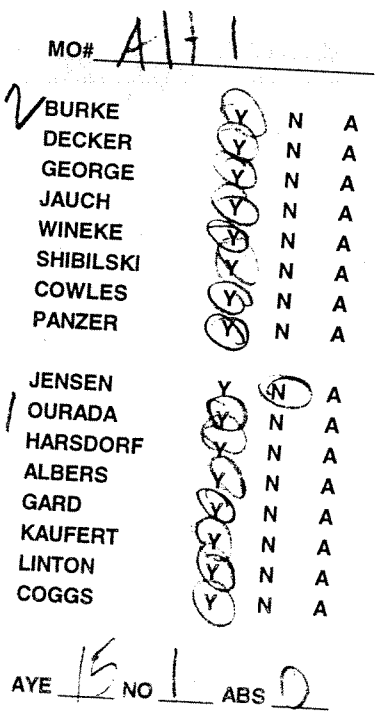
2. Delete 1.0 FED research scientist position. (DNR could reallocate funding within the Bureau of Integrated Science Services to provide for the landscape ecologist position at UW-Madison.)

Alternative 2	FED	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$0	$0
[Change to Bill	*$0*	*- $160,000]*
1998-99 POSITIONS (Change to Base)	- 1.00	0.00
[Change to Bill	*- 1.00*	*0.00]*

3. Maintain current law.

Alternative 3	SEG
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	$0
[Change to Bill	*- $160,000]*

Prepared by: Russ Kava



Representative Albers

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Forest Landscape Ecology Research (Paper #584)
(Input from Forestry Council)

Motion:

Move to require DNR to consult with the Governor's Council on Forestry in developing the annual work plan for the forest landscape ecologist.

MO# 1542

BURKE	Y	N	A
DECKER	Y	N	A
GEORGE	Y	N	A
JAUCH	Y	N	A
WINEKE	Y	N	A
SHIBILSKI	Y	N	A
COWLES	Y	N	A
PANZER	Y	N	A
2 JENSEN	Y	N	A
OURADA	Y	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	N	A
1 ALBERS	Y	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	Y	N	A
LINTON	Y	N	A
COGGS	Y	N	A

AYE 15 NO 1 ABS ____