

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**

<u>Program</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>
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)	<u>937,000</u>	<u>766,000</u>	<u>687,000</u>	<u>291,000</u>	<u>297,000</u>
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**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Estimated Percent</u>
Tree and Shrub Planting	45%
Water Control Structures	15
Grass Planting	15
Habitat Modification	15
Fencing	<u>10</u>
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.

<u>Alternative A1</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

<u>Alternative A2</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

<u>Alternative A3</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

<u>Alternative A4</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$650,000
[Change to Bill]	-\$1,350,000

5. Maintain current law.

<u>Alternative A5</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

<u>Alternative C1</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

<u>Alternative C2</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

MO# Alt # A1

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

AYE 13 NO 3 ABS _____

Prepared by: Russ Kava

PAPER # 581

MO# AH B24C3

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

AYE 16 NO 0 ABS

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.

MO# 1556

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

AYE 16 NO 0 ABS _____

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.

*tech Amend
to Paper #581*

MO# 825

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A

BURKE	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A
AYE	16	NO	0
ABS			

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

<u>Year</u>	<u>Departments Requesting Grants</u>	<u>Funding Requested</u>	<u>Funding Available</u>
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.

<u>Alternative A1</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$1,220,000
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>\$0</i>

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

<u>Alternative A2</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$610,000
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>- \$610,000</i>

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

<u>Alternative A3</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$170,000
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>- \$1,050,000</i>

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

<u>Alternative A4</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$85,000
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>- \$1,135,000</i>

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.

<u>Alternative A5</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$570,000
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>- \$650,000</i>

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.

<u>Alternative A6</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$285,000
[Change to Bill]	- \$935,000

7. Maintain current law.

<u>Alternative A7</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

<u>Alternative B1</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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

MO# Alt#A1

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
BURKE	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A
AYE	10	NO	0
		ABS	

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

<u>Alternative B2</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

Prepared by: Russ Kava

VOTE on Section A on page 17

MO# AH# B3

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
2 BURKE	X	N	A
1 DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A
AYE <u>16</u>	NO <u>0</u>	ABS	_____

MO# AH# C2

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
2 BURKE	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A
AYE <u>16</u>	NO <u>0</u>	ABS	_____

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.

take Amend to paper #582

MO# 835

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

AYE _____ NO _____ ABS _____

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 unallotted 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 unallotted 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.

<u>Alternative 1</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

<u>Alternative 3</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$0
[Change to Bill	- \$1,000,000]

4. Maintain current law.

NO VOTE NEEDED

<u>Alternative 4</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$0
[Change to Bill	- \$1,000,000]

Prepared by: Russ Kava

MO# _____	BURKE	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	
	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
	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.

<u>Alternative 1</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.)

<u>Alternative 2</u>	<u>FED</u>	<u>SEG</u>
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.

<u>Alternative 3</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$0
[Change to Bill	- \$160,000]

Prepared by: Russ Kava

MO# Alt #1

JENSEN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	
OURADA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
HARSDORF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
ALBERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
GARD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
KAUFERT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
LINTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
COGGS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
BURKE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
DECKER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
GEORGE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
JAUCH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
WINEKE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
SHIBILSKI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
COWLES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
PANZER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A	
AYE	<u>15</u>	NO	<u>1</u>	ABS

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

✓ JENSEN	✓	N	A
OURADA	✓	N	A
HARSDORF	✓	N	A
✓ ALBERS	✓	N	A
GARD	Y	N	A
KAUFERT	✓	N	A
LINTON	✓	N	A
COGGS	✓	N	A
BURKE	✓	N	A
DECKER	✓	N	A
GEORGE	✓	N	A
JAUCH	✓	N	A
WINEKE	✓	N	A
SHIBILSKI	✓	N	A
COWLES	✓	N	A
PANZER	✓	N	A
AYE <u>H</u>	NO <u>1</u>	ABS	

To: Joint Committee on Finance

From: Bob Lang, Director
Legislative Fiscal Bureau

ISSUE

Convert Pike Lake State Park to a Southern Forest Property (DNR--Forests and Parks)

[LFB Summary: Page 403, #19]

CURRENT LAW

DNR's park staff manage Wisconsin's recreational properties, including the state parks, state trails, state recreation areas and southern state forest properties. Under statute, state forests are managed to provide a full range of benefits including soil protection, public hunting, protection of water quality, production of recurring forest products, outdoor recreation, native biological diversity, aquatic and terrestrial wildlife and aesthetics. Under statute, state parks are managed to provide areas for public recreation and for public education in conservation and nature study.

Revenue for state parks operations comes primarily from the general fund (GPR) and the parks account of the conservation fund (funded primarily from campsite fees and park admission fees). The main source of revenue for the operations of southern state forests is the forestry account of the conservation fund (funded primarily through forestry fees and the forestry mill tax on property of 20¢ per \$1,000 of property value).

GOVERNOR

Shift \$227,400 and 3.0 positions annually from parks-related GPR to the forestry account of the conservation fund and convert Pike Lake State Park to a southern forest property as a unit of the Kettle Moraine. The anticipated annual revenue of \$135,000 at Pike Lake (admissions and camping fees) would accrue to the forestry account rather than the parks account.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Pike Lake State Park, located in Washington County, is a 678 acre property. The property has 32 campsites, showers, dumping stations, a disabled picnic area, a disabled camp area and facilities for swimming and fishing. There are nature, hiking, snowmobile and cross-country ski trails on the property. The park is located approximately halfway between the Northern and Southern units of the Kettle Moraine State Forests within the Kettle Moraine region of the state.

2. While the statutory purposes behind the management of parks and forests differ, DNR officials indicate that southern state forests tend to be managed more like parks than the northern state forests. The northern state forests (17 properties) are operated by DNR's forestry staff in a manner that tends to focus on the enhancement of their timber resources. The five southern forest properties are operated by state parks personnel and are managed in a manner that tends to give priority to their recreational value.

3. Further, DNR indicates that a shift in funding and classification would have little effect on the operation of Pike Lake State Park. Issues such as hunting on the property, the treatment of timber stands and the treatment of exotic species will be dealt with as part of the master planning process for the property which will be undertaken regardless of Pike Lake's classification as a state park or a southern state forest.

4. In their budget request, DNR proposed shifting the funding and positions for Pike Lake State Park completely from parks SEG to the forestry account. The agency indicated that this would help the parks account maintain a positive balance. DNR projected a balance of approximately \$2.2 million in the parks account at the end of the 1997-99 biennium.

5. The Governor's budget would transfer the funding and positions associated with Pike Lake State Park from the GPR appropriation for the parks system (rather than the SEG appropriation requested by DNR) to the forestry account. However, the Governor also recommends shifting \$180,800 in annual funding for the Kickapoo Management Reserve Board from parks SEG to forestry SEG. Further, the Governor recommends additional expenditures from the parks account (such as the campground reservation system and state snowmobile trail aids), resulting in a projected balance of approximately \$510,000 in the parks account at the end of the 1997-99 biennium.

6. Traditionally, operations of the parks system have been funded relatively equally between GPR and parks SEG. However, over the past several years somewhat more than 50% of funding has come from one or the other source in a given year. In 1996-97, the adjusted base for state parks operations is \$5,618,800 SEG (51% of the total) and \$5,341,300 GPR (49% of the total).

7. Therefore, it could be argued that taking the funding and positions for Pike Lake State Park equally from GPR and parks SEG, rather than completely from either source, would be more consistent with the traditional funding of the parks system.

8. Administration officials, however, indicate that shifting the funding and positions for Pike Lake State Park entirely from GPR to forestry SEG is a budget efficiency measure similar to other items recommended by the Governor to reduce state government GPR costs.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to convert Pike Lake State Park from a state park to southern forest property and reallocate the funding and positions for Pike Lake State Park from GPR to forestry SEG. (\$135,000 annually in revenues at the site would accrue to the forestry account.)

<u>Alternative 1</u>	<u>GPR</u>	<u>SEG</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	- \$454,800	\$454,800	\$0
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>
1998-99 POSITIONS (Change to Base)	- 3.00	3.00	0.00
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>

2. Modify the Governor's recommendation by reallocating the funding and positions for Pike Lake State Park equally from GPR and the parks account (\$113,700 and 1.5 positions annually from each source) to the forestry account. (\$135,000 in revenues at the site would accrue to the forestry account.)

<u>Alternative 2</u>	<u>GPR</u>	<u>SEG</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	- \$227,400	\$227,400	\$0
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>\$227,400</i>	<i>- \$227,400</i>	<i>\$0</i>
1998-99 POSITIONS (Change to Base)	- 1.50	1.50	0.00
<i>[Change to Bill]</i>	<i>1.50</i>	<i>- 1.50</i>	<i>0.00</i>

3. Maintain current law. This would result in Pike Lake State Park remaining a state park and keep the associated GPR funding and positions in the parks system rather than shifting the costs to the forestry account (\$135,000 in revenues at the site would accrue to the parks account).

<u>Alternative 3</u>	<u>GPR</u>	<u>SEG</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$0	\$0	\$0
[Change to Bill]	\$454,800	- \$454,800	\$0]
1998-99 POSITIONS (Change to Base)	0.00	0.00	0.00
[Change to Bill]	3.00	- 3.00	0.00]

Prepared by: Russ Kava

MO# Alt #1

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
<u>BURKE</u>	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A

AYE _____ NO _____ ABS _____

To: Joint Committee on Finance

From: Bob Lang, Director
Legislative Fiscal Bureau

ISSUE

Campground Reservation System (DNR -- Forests and Parks)

[LFB Summary: Page 405, #22]

CURRENT LAW

The Department of Natural Resources is authorized to establish a campground reservation system at any of the state parks or state forests campgrounds. DNR may accept reservation applications each year beginning January 10 and may give reservations until the available sites in a campground for a given date are exhausted. A reservation fee is charged equal to the estimated cost of administering the system (currently \$4). 1995 Act 27 required the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Tourism to work jointly to establish an automated campground reservation system.

Campground reservations are currently accepted by person, by mail, and during certain times, by calling an individual park. Applications must be submitted directly to the forest or park at which a reservation is desired. There is no centralized reservation system linking campgrounds at state parks and forests. Confirmation of reservations are then mailed back to applicants. Because of the volume of applications received by DNR in January, confirmations may not be received by some applicants until late February. Campsites may also be reserved by telephone during the summer, with extended acceptance periods at some parks (Peninsula, Governor Dodge, High Cliff, Devil's Lake, Bong and Mirror Lake). The percentage of reservable campsites ranges from 40% to 100%, depending on the property.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$265,900 SEG in 1997-98 (\$64,600 from the forestry account and \$201,300 from the parks account of the conservation fund) and \$581,600 SEG in 1998-99 (\$122,500 from forestry and \$459,100 from parks) for automation of the reservation system for state park and southern forest campgrounds.

Allow DNR to enter into a contract with another party to operate the campground reservation system. Effective April 1, 1998, delete statutory provisions specifying: (a) when DNR may begin accepting reservation applications each year; (b) how DNR handles early applications; and (c) other processing matters. Effective January 1, 1998, require DNR to promulgate rules for the operation of the campground reservation system, including: (a) the authority to refuse to accept campground reservation applications before a certain date or to treat applications received before that date as if they had been made on that date; and (b) the authority to give reservations for each year until all of the available sites in a campground that are open for reservations for a given date have been reserved. Allow DNR to publish emergency rules, without the finding of an emergency, within three months of bill enactment to implement these provisions.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. In 1996, DNR conducted six focus groups consisting of a total of 48 campers to discuss the current reservation system as well as a proposed system where campers would be able to make reservations statewide with a single phone call and pay with a credit card. Focus group participants felt that under the current reservation system: (a) it takes too long to receive confirmation of whether or not they received a site; (b) the system is paper intensive; and (c) reservation forms are not readily available. Focus group participants also felt that a telephone system would be an improvement if: (a) such a system could offer immediate confirmation of a reservation; and (b) campers could reserve a site according to features they desire as described to a reservation operator.

2. As proposed by the Department, the reservation system would allow campers to place campground reservations statewide by telephone and subsequently through a page on the World Wide Web. The system would be accessible to campers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The system would accept payment by credit card with provisions for those who wish to pay by check. Campers would be provided with immediate reservation confirmation, rather than having to wait several weeks under the current system. The system could also accommodate customer requests for specific sites. If the campground desired by a camper was not available, the reservationist would refer the camper to either a lower-demand time period for the same campground or a lesser-used state campground in the area. The system would also be part of the information technology infrastructure of the Department, providing parks and forests with hardware and software for e-mail, financial reporting and other applications.

3. DNR indicates the vendor would also provide callers to the system with the phone number for a local visitor's bureau, private campground or other local organization if a state campground is not available.

4. The Department is currently in the process of issuing requests for proposals (RFPs) for operation of the campground reservation system, with a contract for operation expected to be issued in November, 1997. For 1998, reservations would be mailed into the call center starting on January 10, 1998. The reservations that are mailed in for 1998 would be entered into the call center database. The Department anticipates that the call center would begin taking calls and accepting reservations in April, 1998, with applications being accepted over the World Wide Web by January, 1999.

5. The personal computers, printers, and other hardware and training costs would be paid through a three-year master lease contract (\$305,700 in both the 1997-99 and 1999-2001 biennia). Parks staff indicate that equipment for the campground reservation system would initially be installed at approximately 40 of the 46 parks and forests properties in the state with family campgrounds. Funding has also been proposed for online telecommunications costs, credit card transaction fees and Departmental support for installation of computers. The Department is considering adding the remaining properties, properties with group campgrounds and other Department facilities (amphitheaters, auditoriums and conference rooms) to the automated reservation system in the future.

6. Parks staff indicate that they are choosing to contract with a vendor to run the call center because: (a) based on the experience of other states, they estimated start-up costs related to creating a DNR call center at approximately \$1 million with ongoing operations costs of approximately \$600,000 annually; and (b) the workload at the call center would likely fluctuate depending on the time of the year, making it difficult for the Department to adjust staffing levels as quickly as necessary. Under SB 77, any start-up or ongoing costs related to the call center would be borne by the vendor.

7. Program staff indicate that the vendor would keep the reservation fee as part of the cost of running the system. DNR currently retains this fee. The new reservation fee will be set as part of the RFP process. Parks staff indicate that this fee would likely be in the \$4 to \$8 range. The possibility of a higher fee was discussed as part of the focus groups, with the researchers concluding that many campers would be willing to pay more for a campground reservation system if site confirmation were immediate.

8. While the \$4 reservation fee will no longer be deposited in the parks account, DNR believes that this loss in revenue would be balanced by increased use of campgrounds in the state. DNR would continue to retain the revenue from campsite fees and vehicle admission fees. Parks officials estimate an initial revenue loss of approximately \$80,000 in calendar year 1998 and a revenue increase of approximately \$275,000 in calendar year 1999. This is based on a 10% increase in reservations in 1998 and a 15% increase in 1999, consistent with the 13.5%

increase seen between 1995 and 1996 when telephone reservations were first initiated. In addition, there would be some economic benefit to communities near campgrounds due to the increased number of campers. There would, however, be ongoing costs of approximately \$550,000 annually to operate and maintain the system at the state parks and forests. Thus, while it is unclear that the state will recover the costs of the system, it could be argued that the benefits of an automated reservation system for campground users would outweigh the costs.

9. Due to an oversight in the preparation of the budget request, DNR did not include the funding needed to implement the automated reservation system at the Northern Highland/American Legion and Black River State Forests. Both of these properties take campground reservations under the current system. Funding of \$14,100 in 1997-98 and \$22,400 in 1998-99 would be needed for information technology infrastructure and ongoing operations costs similar to those proposed for the other properties.

ALTERNATIVES TO BASE

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$265,900 in 1997-98 and \$581,600 in 1998-99 for automation of the reservation system for state park and forest campgrounds and to allow DNR to enter into a contract with another party to operate the campground reservation system.

<u>Alternative 1</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$847,500
[Change to Bill]	\$0

2. In addition to Alternative 1, provide \$14,100 in 1997-98 and \$22,400 in 1998-99 from the forestry account to implement the automated reservation system at the Northern Highland/American Legion and Black River State Forests.

<u>Alternative 2</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$36,500
[Change to Bill]	\$36,500

3. Maintain current law.

<u>Alternative 3</u>	<u>SEG</u>
1997-99 FUNDING (Change to Base)	\$0
[Change to Bill]	- \$847,500

Prepared by: Russ Kava

NATURAL RESOURCES

Campground Reservation System (Paper #586)

Motion:

Move to require DNR to retain \$1 from the reservation fee charged by the vendor under the automated reservation system. Further, require Joint Committee on Finance review of the contract negotiated by DNR and the vendor chosen for the automated reservation system under a 14-day passive review process before final approval of the contract.

Note:

Based on projections in the number of reservations, DNR would retain an estimated \$81,000 in calendar year 1998 and an estimated \$92,800 in calendar year 1999 under this motion. The fee charged by the vendor would also likely increase by approximately \$1 (to a \$5 to \$9 range rather than \$4 to \$8 under the bill).

MO# 910

JENSEN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
OURADA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
HARSDORF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
/ALBERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
GARD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
2KAUFERT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
LINTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
COGGS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
BURKE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
DECKER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
GEORGE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
JAUCH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
WINEKE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
SHIBILSKI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
COWLES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
PANZER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N	A
AYE	<u>14</u>	NO	<u>2</u> ABS

MO# AIT#2

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

AYE NO ABS

PAPER #580

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Henry Aaron State Park Trail

Motion:

Move to provide \$46,000 in 1997-98 and \$58,000 in 1998-99 and 1.0 project manager position annually from the parks account of the conservation fund for development, operation and maintenance of the Henry Aaron State Park Trail.

Note:

The project manager would write grants, negotiate land transactions, conduct site planning, oversee construction development and work with landowners and other project partners. Operations and maintenance of the trail would be funded at \$5,000 in 1998-99.

[Change to Base: \$104,000 SEG and 1.0 position]

[Change to Bill: \$104,000 SEG and 1.0 position]

MO# 1550

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
/BURKE	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
ZJAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A

AYE 16 NO 0 ABS _____

Representative Ourada
Senator Burke

NATURAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Wisconsin Environmental Education Board

Motion:

Move to provide \$200,000 annually from the forestry account for the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board for grants for forestry-related environmental education programs.

Note:

The Environmental Education Board under DPI is responsible for identifying needs and establishing priorities for environmental education in public schools. The Board also awards grants to nonprofit corporations and public agencies for the development, dissemination and presentation of environmental education programs. The grant recipient must match at least 25% of the amount of the grant. Grants are currently funded from GPR (\$200,000) and the environmental fund (\$30,000). This motion would provide an additional \$200,000 annually from the forestry account for grants for environmental education programs related to forestry.

[Change to Base: \$400,000 SEG]
[Change to Bill: \$400,000 SEG]

MO#

760

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
2 BURKE	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A
AYE	16	NO	0
		ABS	

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Milwaukee Tree Planting Demonstration Project

Motion:

Move to earmark \$50,000 annually in 1997-99 only from the urban forestry grant program for a tree planting demonstration program in Milwaukee.

Note:

The proposed tree planting program would involve the planting of trees on private land, including the central city. The motion would earmark \$50,000 of the \$529,900 provided annually for the urban forestry grant program under SB 77 for the Milwaukee tree planting project.

MO# 1549

JENSEN	Y	X	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	Y	X	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	Y	X	A
KAUFERT	Y	X	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
BURKE	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
2GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A
AYE	<u>12</u>	NO	<u>4</u> ABS

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Forestry Positions

Motion:

Move to provide \$62,000 SEG in 1997-98 and \$74,600 SEG in 1998-99 and 1.5 SEG positions for a plant pest and disease specialist position and a one-half time forest resource educator position.

Further, convert \$224,000 and 4.5 positions annually from FED to forestry SEG.

Note:

The plant pest and disease specialist position would coordinate DNR's gypsy moth integrated pest management program.

The forest resource educator position currently provides forest appreciation and awareness, such as coordination and implementation of the department's tree and forest resource education program. The position was authorized in the 1991-93 biennial budget, half funded from private contributions and half funded from forestry SEG. DNR indicates that private sector contributions have not been sufficient to support the 0.5 PR position. SB 77 would eliminate the PR portion of the position and require reallocation of an existing 0.5 SEG position if Forestry wanted to maintain the full position. This motion would restore the 0.5 position but fund it from the forestry account.

The forestry program currently supports eight positions with federal funding: (a) two positions with the Agricultural Conservation Program grant, both of which would be converted in this motion; (b) one with the Conservation Reserve Program grant, which would be converted; (c) one with the Forest Resource Management grant, of which 0.4 position would be converted; and (d) four with the Rural Fire Prevention and Control grant, of which 1.1 positions would be converted. Beginning in 1997, DNR indicates there may not be adequate funding to support the 4.5 positions from federal sources. This motion would fund the positions with forestry SEG.

[Change to Base: \$584,600 SEG and 6.0 SEG positions, -\$448,000 FED and -4.5 FED positions]

[Change to Bill: \$584,600 SEG and 6.0 SEG positions, -\$448,000 FED and -4.5 FED positions]

MO# 1092

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

AYE 15 NO 1 ABS

NATURAL RESOURCES AND EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

Wisconsin Women in Timber

Motion:

Move to provide ~~\$350,000~~ ^{\$200,000} in 1997-98 from the forestry account to Wisconsin Women in Timber for an educational program and instructional materials as follows: (a) \$50,000 for an instructional video on forestry to be produced by the Educational Communications Board; (b) ~~\$200,000~~ ^{\$200,000} for instructor salaries to allow members of Wisconsin Women in Timber to provide forestry education, which would utilize the ECB-produced video; and (c) ~~\$100,000~~ ^{\$50,000} for other instructional materials. Further, make dispersal of funding contingent on the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the ECB, UW-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources Timber Management Program and Wisconsin Women in Timber regarding the goals of the program.

[Change to Base: \$350,000 SEG]

[Change to Bill: \$350,000 SEG]

MO# 1567
as Amended

JENSEN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OURADA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HARSDORF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ALBERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KAUFERT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LINTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COGGS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BURKE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DECKER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GEORGE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JAUCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WINEKE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SHIBILSKI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COWLES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PANZER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AYE	<u>7</u>	NO	<u>9</u> ABS

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Managed Forest Land

Motion:

Move to require DNR to modify the definition of "developed for human residence" within the Managed Forest Land (MFL) program through the rule-making process to address the development of lands for secondary homes to exclude up to one acre of property surrounding a secondary home. Require DNR to submit rule changes to the Legislature by September 1, 1998.

Note:

Under the Managed Forest Land program, land designated as MFL is not taxable. A person's primary residence, or domicile, is considered developed for human residence and is not eligible for designation as managed forest land. A secondary residence, however, is not considered developed for human residence and is thus eligible for MFL designation. The land underneath a primary residence is thus taxable, while the land underneath a secondary residence, if designated as MFL, is not taxable. DNR indicates it would develop criteria under which secondary residences would not be eligible for MFL designation, making the land under such residences taxable.

MO# 1565

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
/ LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
2 BURKE	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A
AYE	110	NO	0
		ABS	

NATURAL RESOURCES -- FORESTS AND PARKS

Motion:

Move to shift \$700,000 in 1997-98 and \$700,000 in 1998-99 only, from the forestry account for the payment of principal and interest related to the acquisition and development of forestry-related properties under the stewardship program.

Note:

[Change to Base: -\$1,400,000 GPR and \$1,400,000 SEG]
[Change to Bill: -\$1,400,000 GPR and \$1,400,000 SEG]

MO# 1572

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

AYE 12 NO 4 ABS _____

NATURAL RESOURCES

Forests and Parks

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- Kettle Moraine Exotic Species Control
- Shift Kickapoo Reserve Management Board Funding
- Parks and Southern Forests Facilities
- Parks and Southern Forests Preventive Maintenance
- State Park and Trail Operations

JENSEN	X	N	A
OURADA	X	N	A
HARSDORF	X	N	A
ALBERS	X	N	A
GARD	X	N	A
KAUFERT	X	N	A
LINTON	X	N	A
COGGS	X	N	A
2 BURKE	X	N	A
DECKER	X	N	A
GEORGE	X	N	A
JAUCH	X	N	A
WINEKE	X	N	A
SHIBILSKI	X	N	A
COWLES	X	N	A
PANZER	X	N	A
AYE	16	NO	0 ABS

LFB Summary Item to be Addressed in a Subsequent Paper

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