



2001 ASSEMBLY BILL 744

January 23, 2002 - Introduced by Representative AINSWORTH, by request of Department of Natural Resources. Referred to Committee on Rural Affairs and Forestry.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 77.82 (7) (c) and 77.82 (12); and **to create** 77.18 of the statutes;
2 **relating to:** signature and authorization requirements for orders under the
3 forest croplands program and modifications to certain deadline dates under the
4 managed forest land program.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, the department of natural resources (DNR) administers the forest croplands program and the managed forest land program which are similar programs that exempt a landowner from payment of municipal property taxes on the land in the program in exchange for the landowner's payment of an acreage share, which is lower than the municipal property tax, and for the landowner's compliance with approved forestry and other conservation practices. In administering these programs, DNR must record orders that designate or withdraw or declassify land from these programs with the registers of deeds in the counties in which the land is located and must file a copy of orders withdrawing or declassifying lands from these programs with certain governmental agencies. Current law also requires, unless different requirements apply, every instrument offered for recording in the office of the register of deeds to bear all of the required signatures and to contain a specified form of authentication.

For the managed forest land program, current law allows the order to be signed by a facsimile signature of a DNR employee or official, and it exempts the order from the authentication requirement for recording with the office of the register of deeds.

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This bill creates the same procedure and exemption for orders signed by a DNR employee or official under the forest croplands program.

The bill changes the date before which a petition to designate land under the managed forest land program must be filed by a landowner who owns less than 1,000 acres in the state in order to receive a decision approving or disapproving the petition by the following November 21. The bill moves the date up from January 31 to December 31.

Under the managed forest land program, orders are for a term of either 25 years or 50 years. As the program is administered by DNR, an order generally expires on the December 31 of the last year of the order. The bill changes the deadline for a landowner to file a petition to renew an order from the March 31 before the order expires to the December 31 before it expires. The bill also imposes an earlier deadline for DNR to notify a landowner of an upcoming expiration date for a managed forest land order by changing the deadline from the January 31 before the expiration date to the preceding September 30.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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

1 **SECTION 1.** 77.18 of the statutes is created to read:

2 **77.18 Signatures. (1)** The signature of an official or an employee of the
3 department of natural resources may be stamped, printed, or otherwise reproduced
4 on an order relating to forest croplands under this subchapter after the official or
5 employee adopts the stamped, printed, or otherwise reproduced signature as his or
6 her facsimile signature.

7 **(2)** The signature or the facsimile signature under sub. (1) of an official or an
8 employee of the department of natural resources meets the requirements under s.
9 706.05 (2) (a).

10 **(3)** The requirements of s. 706.05 (2) (b) do not apply to orders issued under this
11 subchapter.

12 **SECTION 2.** 77.82 (7) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

