

Report From Agency

REPORT TO LEGISLATURE

NR 47, subch. VI, Wis. Adm. Code
County forest administration grant program

Board Order No. FR-12-08
Clearinghouse Rule No. 08-046

Basis and Purpose of the Proposed Rule

2007 Act 20 created s. 28.11(5m)(am), Stats., which added language to the County Forest Administrator grant program. The grant name was changed to the County Forest Administration grant program and a provision was added that makes a county's dues to a non-profit organization that represents their collective county forest interests eligible for funding. The rule change provides for implementation of the change in the law.

The proposed rule makes eligible for cost-sharing, a county's dues to a non-profit organization that represents the collective interests of counties in the county forest program and that serves as an organizational liaison to the Department of Natural Resources. The total amount that the department may award in funding for this portion of the grant cannot exceed \$50,000 annually. The remainder of the grant is unchanged, providing for up to 50% of the cost of a county forest administrator's salary and benefits so long as the benefits don't exceed more than 40% of the salary. This grant program has been instrumental in encouraging counties to hire professionally-qualified staff to administer their county forests and has facilitated the ability of the program to become green-certified.

Summary of Public Comments

A video conference hearing, at 3 sites (Madison, Eau Claire, Rhinelander), was held to formally request public input. In addition, the rule was posted on the administrative rules website. Two comments were received. The Wisconsin County Forests Association supported the changes as proposed. The Legislative Rules Clearinghouse proposed one word change.

Modifications Made

In s. NR 47.70(4)(d), the word "may not" has replaced the previous wording of "cannot".

Appearances at the Public Hearing

No one appeared at the public hearing.

Changes to Rule Analysis and Fiscal Estimate

None were required.

Response to Legislative Council Rules Clearinghouse Report

The recommendation was accepted.

Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

The proposed rule does not affect small business; therefore, a final regulatory flexibility analysis is not required.