

# Protecting Working Forests: Minnesota's Forest Legacy and Forests for the Future Programs

## *Landowner Application and Instructions*



This application is intended to allow landowners to apply for project funding made available to the Forest Legacy Program and the Minnesota Forests for the Future Program in order to protect environmentally important private forests, primarily through the purchase of conservation easements. Forest land eligible for the programs shall provide **one or more** of the following public benefits:

1. The property contributes to the protection of large forest blocks;
2. the property provides fish and wildlife habitat, promotes water quality or has other environmental benefits;
3. the property provides opportunities for the continuation of traditional forest uses including forest management;
4. the property contains public recreation opportunities such as public access or public recreation trails.

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is available to all individuals regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, public assistance status, age, sexual orientation, disability, or activity on behalf of a local human-rights commission. Discrimination inquiries should be sent to Minnesota DNR, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4049 or to the Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240

### **Purpose of the Forest Legacy Program and the Forests for the Future Program**

The overall purpose of the Forest Legacy and the Forests for the Future Programs is to protect private working forests that provide important public benefits including environmental, economic and recreational benefits.

- The **Forest Legacy Program (FLP)** is a partnership between the State and the USDA Forest Service to identify and protect environmentally important forests from conversion to non-forest uses. Projects are funded using federal funds and local cost-sharing. Eligible projects must be located within designated Forest Legacy Areas within the State (see Minnesota Forest Legacy Areas Map).
- The **Minnesota Forests for the Future Program (MFF)** was established by the Minnesota Legislature to protect and conserve private working forests throughout Minnesota that contain timber, scenic, recreational, fish and wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered species, and other cultural and environmental values. Projects are funded using state, federal and private funds.

**Deadlines:** Applications are accepted throughout the year.

**Submit completed Applications to:** Christine Ostern  
(Retain a copy for your files) Forest Legacy Coordinator  
Department of Natural Resources –Forestry  
305 E. Business Park Drive  
Cloquet, MN 55720

**Questions? Contact Forest Legacy Coordinator** Phone: 218-343-1790  
Email: [Christine.Ostern@state.mn.us](mailto:Christine.Ostern@state.mn.us)

**Or visit Minnesota’s Forest Legacy Website:**  
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestlegacy/index.html>

## **Instructions**

- 1. Fill out the form to the best of your ability. You may want to contact the Forest Legacy Coordinator for assistance in completing this form.**
- 2. Submit the following items for your application:**
  - **A signed and completed application form.**
  - **A county plat map or other similar map showing the location of your property.**
  - **Aerial photo of the property with landowner property outlined.**
  - **A copy of your forest management plan, if available.**
  - **Letters of support, if applicable.**
  - **Any other supporting documents or written comments for your property.**
- 3. Applications will be prioritized based on a competitive application process as determined by the Department of Natural Resources and/or the U.S. Forest Service.**

# Forest Legacy Program and Minnesota Forests for the Future Program Application

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Division of Forestry

## 1: Applicant Information

Landowner Name –list all owners: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated contact for owner (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2: Property Information

Property Address (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ Forest Legacy Area (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Property is located in: Section(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Township: \_\_\_\_\_ Range: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Property Acres: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Forested Acres: \_\_\_\_\_

How many acres of this property are you interested in considering for the program? \_\_\_\_\_

Forest acres: \_\_\_\_\_ Open land or non-forest acres \_\_\_\_\_

What are the current uses of the property i.e. recreation, hunting, timber management, nature observation, farming, grazing, etc.?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the current zoning of the property? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there legal access for the property? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Is this property enrolled in a forest property tax program: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, which program: \_\_\_\_\_ Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA)

\_\_\_\_\_ 2c Managed Forest Land Classification (Class 2c)

Are there any other known encumbrances or liens on the property including mortgages, easements, contracts, leases, covenants or outstanding rights of record? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please identify: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a written forest management plan such as Forest Stewardship Plan? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please send a copy with your application.

Are there any buildings, structures or improvements such as houses, barns, sheds, roads, gravel pits, power lines, or dams on the land proposed for the program? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please describe:

---

---

To the best of your knowledge, are there any known present or past environmental hazards or waste or dump sites on the property or abutting properties ? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please describe:

---

---

**3: Property Characteristics:** Help us understand the uniqueness of your property. Your comments will help us in evaluating the property for the program.

Please describe the following as they pertain to your property:

**A. Fish and Wildlife Habitat:** Describe how your property contributes to the maintenance or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitats. List habitats present (such as forest types i.e. aspen, red pine, oak, bogs, wetlands, etc.) and species found on the property .

**B. Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species including Unique Habitats and Forest Communities:** List and describe any rare plants, animals or habitats located on your property. Are there species in greatest conservation need found on or near your property?

**C. Watersheds and Water Quality:** Describe the importance of your property to water related benefits. List the amount of shoreline frontage for lakes, streams and rivers located on the property. Is the property within a regional drinking water aquifer and/or does the parcel drain into a stream or river that feeds a public water supply lake or river.

- D. Existing or Potential Public Recreational Opportunities:** Does the parcel adjoin a public water body such as a lake or river that provides public recreational opportunities? Does your property contain recreational trails open to the public (i.e. snowmobile trails) or is public access otherwise allowed on your property?
- E. Forest Productivity and Forest Management Considerations:** Describe any forest management activities conducted on the property including timber harvesting, reforestation, maple syrup production, Christmas trees etc. Are you actively following a forest management plan prepared by a professional forester? Is the property a certified Tree Farm? Does your property contain productive forests as determined by site indices or soils interpretations?
- F. Other ecological, cultural and scenic resources:** List any documented cultural or scenic resources found on your property including old logging camps and pioneer home sites, or designated scenic roads, routes and rivers.
- G. Connectivity and adjacency to other forested areas including protected forests (state, county, federal forests):** Describe any adjacent or nearby protected forests including state, county or federal lands. Is your property part of a large contiguous forest block?
- H. Local, Regional, or Statewide Conservation Initiative:** Describe how your property contributes to a local, regional, or statewide conservation effort or plan such as a county water plan, a regional forest landscape plan, or a statewide species protection plan.
- I. Forest Land Conversion Threats:** Describe threats to the forest that are occurring in your area that make forest land conversion to non-forest uses more likely such as forest-to-housing conversions or

forest-to-agriculture conversions. Also note if there is significant subdivision occurring for forest parcels in the surrounding area.

**J. Letters of Support:** What organizations support this request? Please submit a letter of support for each supporting organization.

**K. Additional Comments:** Add any additional comments you want to make about your property.

**4: Financial Information:** The following estimates are preliminary only. **Any final offer cannot exceed fair market value as determined by an appraisal meeting federal and/or state appraisal standards.**

A. What is the estimated total value of this property?

B. How was this value determined? (Examples: landowner's personal estimate, licensed appraiser, realtor, county tax records).

If appraised, what is the date of the appraisal?

C. Are you willing to donate a part of the easement value? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ What percentage? \_\_\_\_\_%

D. Is there another source, such as a Land trust or other agency willing to fund part of the purchase price? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**5: Easement Terms:** A conservation easement will place permanent restrictions on the land for long-term conservation purposes. The easement may be sold or transferred, but the conservation easement will permanently encumber the land. The following rights are typically restricted with a working forest conservation easement. Checking **AGREE** (agrees with the restriction or term) or **DISAGREE** (does not agree with the restriction or term) does not commit you to anything, it merely assists Minnesota DNR in evaluating your property for the program.

The following restrictions are included in Forest Legacy and Minnesota Forests for the Future Conservation easements. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the restriction or prohibition.

- **Prohibition on subdivision.** Subdivision of properties will generally be prohibited and only allowed in very limited circumstances.  
Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_
- **Prohibition on industrial, residential, or commercial uses and structures within the forest.** This restriction generally prohibits developments or uses of the property not consistent with protecting the forest. There are exceptions for structures like sugar shacks or small sheds associated with allowed forest management activities. Houses, barns or developed areas are generally not included as part of the easement property.  
Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_
- **Prohibition on surface disturbances such as mining.** Limited sand and gravel excavations may be permitted for use on the property. Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_
- **Requirement for the development and adherence to a multi-resource forest management plan such as a Forest Stewardship Plan.** The Forest Management Plan must be approved by MN DNR- Division of Forestry. The landowner retains the right to use the property for traditional forest uses such as forest management (including timber harvesting) as well as for non-commercial recreational purposes. Roads and trails consistent with forestry and recreational uses are allowed. Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_
- **Prohibition on the conversion of forest to non-forest uses.** The easement requires the landowner to manage the property in a manner that is consistent with the purposes of the program and that the landowner shall not convert the property to non-forest uses.  
Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_
- **Limitation on non-forest areas included in the easement area.** The purpose of these programs is to protect forest land. In some situations a limited amount of compatible non-forest areas such as pasture, grassland, agricultural fields or other open lands may be included in the easement area. When allowed, agricultural practices must be performed in ways consistent with conserving soil, water and other natural resources. Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_
- **Prohibition of trash dumps, waste disposal and hazardous materials.** No part of the easement property can be used for such purposes. Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_
- **Public Assess is not** required by either the Forest Legacy Program or the Minnesota Forests for the Future Program. Public access is at the sole discretion of the landowner. Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_
- **Access by MNDNR:** Landowner will allow access by Minnesota DNR for the purpose of easement monitoring. MN DNR will annually visit the property to ensure compliance with the easement. Agree:\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ Unsure\_\_\_\_\_

**6: Testimony and Permission:**

The information in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I (we), as the landowner(s) or landowner’s authorized agent (proof of authorization must accompany the application) agree to allow inspection, appraisal, and survey of my property being offered for consideration under Minnesota’s Forest Legacy Program and/or Minnesota Forests for the Future Program. I agree to allow members of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Forest Legacy committee or their designated staff to inspect my property at any mutually agreeable time for the purposes of this application. I understand I shall be notified in advance of all inspection visits.

I also understand that this property will not be purchased if negotiations do not reach an amicable agreement or if the property does not meet the needs or qualifications of the Minnesota Forest Legacy Program or Minnesota Forests for the Future Program. Conservation easements will only be purchased from willing sellers.

<b>Signature(s) of landowner(s) or legal agent</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Mail completed application to:</b>
_____	_____	Christine Ostern
_____	_____	Forest Legacy Coordinator
_____	_____	MN DNR Division of Forestry
		305 E. Business Park Drive
		Cloquet, MN 55720
		Phone: 218-343-1790

*Must be signed in ink.*