

Aesthetics

Wisconsin's forests are, without a doubt, breathtaking. Anyone who has experienced a Northwoods autumn or strolled through an oak forest can attest to that. We are coming more and more to realize the value that this aesthetic quality has for us. Although it is difficult to assign a specific dollar amount to aesthetics, we know that the natural grace and splendor of our forests is a treasure of inestimable value. We know that we play an integral role in the forest community, and that knowledge also has worth. There is a certain rightness of things to be felt when experiencing a healthy forest. This elusive sensation is valued by many. The relationship we have with the trees, animals, and plants surrounding us imparts a unique appreciation for nature.

Many people value the forest just for existing. Although this is often difficult to express just so, this value has been identified in surveys of Wisconsinites. We like to think of the forest outside of our homes and office buildings and schools and know that it is there, and will continue to offer its bounty to the people of this state for generations to come.

Wisconsin's forests are diverse, productive, extensive, and beautiful. They have helped to define the state's history and will continue to influence its future. The future forest will also be influenced by the trends already evident in relation to the state's forests. These trends and the current forest conditions define some important issues that will be important to the state.

Aesthetics are currently being maintained in the state, so this will not be a priority for the Forest Legacy Program. It is the intent of the Forest Legacy Program to continue practices that balance forest harvesting and aesthetics.