

## Common Questions

### 1. What's the difference between cutting trees along a residential shoreline and cutting trees along my forestland shoreline?

In most cases, tree cutting done along a shoreline for residential purposes is usually done to permanently alter the shoreline in order to accommodate homes, lawns, etc. On the other hand, forest management usually includes periodic harvesting of trees – allowing new trees to grow in their place.

### 2. When do I need a zoning permit?

Whenever you're planning to erect a structure or alter the land in some way, such as cutting trees, grading soil, etc., you'll need to contact your local zoning administrator to determine permit requirements. Permits for certain activities (i.e. in-water activities or if a wetland is present) from your local DNR water management specialist may also be necessary.

### 3. Do I need a permit to cut trees?

If you are going to cut trees along a shoreline, you need to contact your county zoning administrator first to find out the specific regulations in your area. If you are going to sell wood products (saw-timber, pulp, firewood, Christmas trees, etc.) from any trees that are cut, no matter how far they are from the water, you must first file a cutting notice with the County Clerk (Chapter 26, Wis. State Statute).

### 4. A stream crosses my land. I've been told it might be "navigable." What does this mean?

Navigable waterways are those which have a distinguishable bed (bottom or channel) and enough water (at least once each year) to regularly support navigation by a small craft. Local and state regulations apply to navigable waterways and adjacent land, so it's important to check with DNR and local zoning authorities before starting any cutting or other projects in or near the waterway. The public also has certain rights in navigable waterways, such as recreation.

## Contacts & Resources

### DNR Regional Headquarters

DNR regional foresters and water management specialists can be contacted through your regional DNR headquarters office:

Northeast Region:	Green Bay 920-492-5800
West Central Region:	Eau Claire 715-839-3700
South Central Region:	Fitchburg 608-275-3266
Southeast Region:	Milwaukee 414-263-8500
Northern Region:	Spooner 715-635-2101
	Rhineland 715-365-8900

### County Contacts

For further information on county shoreland requirements, contact your county zoning administrator or view a county-by-county listing of ordinances on the DNR web site listed below.

### Web resources

DNR Shoreland Management Program (& county zoning links)  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/title.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/title.htm)

Wisconsin Forestry BMPS (DNR Forestry Bureau)  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/usesof/bmp/BMP.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/usesof/bmp/BMP.htm)

DNR Waterway & Wetland Permits  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fhp/waterway/index.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fhp/waterway/index.htm)

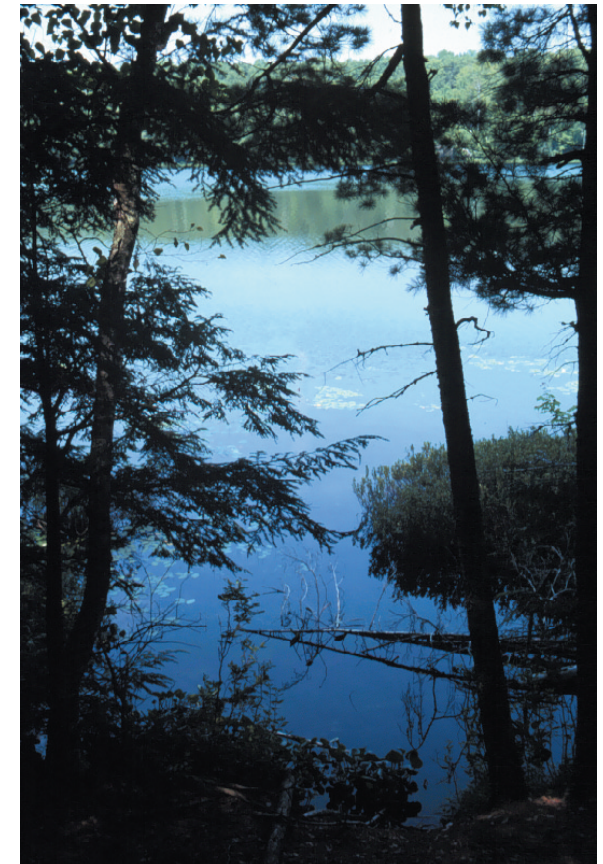
Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association  
[www.wisconsinwoodlands.org](http://www.wisconsinwoodlands.org)

Wisconsin Association of Lakes  
[www.wisconsinlakes.org](http://www.wisconsinlakes.org)



# Managing Wisconsin's Forested Shorelands

## A Landowner's Guide



## Sustainable Forests Protect Clean Water

From the shores of Lakes Michigan and Superior to the Mississippi River, Wisconsin is blessed with an incredible wealth and variety of lakes, wetlands, rivers and streams. The Badger state also abounds with forestlands, thanks to reforestation efforts in the last 100 years and careful management by Wisconsin's public and private land managers. Wisconsin has 34.7 million acres, of which 16 million or 46 percent, are covered with trees.

These natural resources are important to local economies and private forest owners. They are also home to Wisconsin's fish and wildlife, which define the character of the state.

Protecting forest and water resources is critical for Wisconsin's citizens, tourists, and the fish and wildlife that depend on them. Wisconsin has several programs designed to help private forest landowners sustain these resources and their livelihoods. This brochure describes how these programs can help you achieve your goals for your forestland while protecting water quality and meeting state law. The brochure also provides valuable information about contacts and key resources.

## Managing Shorelands to Protect Lakes and Rivers

To protect Wisconsin's lakes and rivers, people who own land and forests along shorelines are required to follow rules governing how far structures must be set back from the water's edge, the removal of trees from the shoreland, and other activities that could affect water quality and habitat.

These rules have been in place for more than thirty years and are part of the partnership between state and local government. This partnership, known as the Shoreland Management Program, requires that certain activities near navigable lakes and streams meet statewide minimum standards. While DNR maintains oversight responsibility, each county shoreland zoning ordinance must meet or

be more protective than the minimum state standards found in ch. NR115 Wis. Adm. Code.

For the most part, these rules apply to unincorporated areas, particularly:

- Land within 1,000 feet of a navigable lake, flowage or pond; or
- Land within 300 feet of a navigable stream or the landward side of the floodplain (whichever is greater).

Activities which will be regulated on forested shorelands include:

- Controls on cutting shoreland vegetation,
- Standards for earth-moving activities, and
- Protection for wetlands.

Other activities regulated in the shoreland zone include:

- Setbacks for structures from waterways,
- Minimum lot sizes and land division review, and
- Restrictions on improvements to older structures that don't meet shoreland standards.

For more information on statewide regulations, contact your DNR water management specialist (see back). For further information on county shoreland requirements, contact your county zoning administrator or view a county-by-county listing of ordinances on the DNR web site (see back).

## Sustaining & Protecting your Forest Investment

Wisconsin's forests play a vital role in the economic and social well being of our state's landowners and visitors. By providing income from forest products, habitat for plants and wildlife, and aesthetics for recreation, our forests enrich the lives of everyone. Since the early days of the cutover, when Wisconsin's forests were heavily harvested, our forests have been steadily growing. Today our forests are composed of larger, more valuable timber and better wildlife habitat than they were 80 or even 25 years ago. The DNR's

Division of Forestry is dedicated to maintaining and improving the health and quality of Wisconsin's forests today and for future generations. With a statewide network of educated, professionally trained foresters and staff members, the DNR provides technical forest management expertise on state and privately owned forests.

Since 1927, the Wisconsin DNR has been helping private landowners manage and protect their forests through forest management assistance programs. Over the years, the assistance programs have evolved to include a wider range of natural resources. Today's Managed Forest Law program considers not only trees but also water resources, soils, aesthetics, threatened and endangered species, and wildlife habitat. Participants in the Managed Forest Law program receive technical forestry assistance, a professionally prepared management plan and deferred property taxes. In addition, forested shorelands enrolled in the program are protected from development for 25 or 50 years.

To find out if your lands qualify for entry into the Managed Forest Law Program, contact your local DNR forester (see back).

## Maximizing Water Quality Protection in Forest Activities

Wisconsin's forestry "Best Management Practices" or BMPs are voluntary guidelines to help loggers, landowners, and natural resource managers minimize runoff resulting from forestry operations. The BMPs cover activities such as building roads and skid trails, installing stream crossings, and timber harvesting practices. The BMPs also include guidelines for managing forestland adjacent to rivers and lakes.

The BMPs are described in the BMP Field Manual, available free from your local DNR Forester (and the DNR's website, see back). The BMP Field Manual also includes information on laws relating to wetlands, spills, and stream crossing permits. BMP education and training workshops are offered for private landowners, loggers, and natural resource managers.