



Dec 30, 2014

The Honorable Scott Walker
Office of the Governor
115 E Capitol #1
Madison, WI 53702

RE: Rescinding of the Ban on Leasing Woodlands in the Managed Forest Law

Dear Governor Walker:

Wisconsin's tree farmers need your help. The bottom line is that our tax and regulatory system no longer allows us to grow the raw material needed by our forest products industry.

When Act 30 was signed in 2007, landowners of over 2 million acres of forest land were abruptly informed by the DNR that we could no longer lease our lands for recreational purposes, a revenue source we had relied upon to carry us through between harvests.

We were dismayed to learn that we had no recourse to this action and did not have the ability to withdraw from the program. Not only did Act 30 take away our ability to obtain supplemental income, it also violated what we had believed to be a "contract" with the state.

The inability to receive income between harvests has left many of us with broken business plans. This, along with other regulatory and tax changes, has made the growing of trees as a business nearly impossible.

Please consider taking a small first step to help us by rescinding an egregious action made by the previous administration. To correct what has hurt so many of Wisconsin's tree farmers, we ask that you include language in the budget bill that would make this change.

The ability to use timber land for multiple purposes is critical to us to be able to economically grow our long term crop. We hope that, with your help, Wisconsin will continue to be our nation's leader in the forest products industry.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doug Duren', is located below the 'Sincerely,' text.

Doug Duren, President
Wisconsin Alliance of Forest Owners

Cc: Senator Alberta Darling, Representative John Nygren, Senator Tom Tiffany, Representative Jeff Mursau

LANGUAGE INTRODUCED ON AUGUST 3, 2011 BY JOINT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

(not passed)

LEASING OF MANAGED FOREST LAND

Under current law, for land designated as MFL under an order that takes effect on or after October 27, 2007, no person may enter into a lease or other agreement for consideration if the purpose of the lease or agreement is to permit persons to engage in a recreational activity. Any lease or other agreement for consideration that permits persons to engage in a recreational activity was voided effective January 1, 2008.

The managed forest law defines recreational activities to include hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, and staying in cabins.

This bill repeals the prohibition on leasing of MFL. Instead, the bill permits the leasing of MFL, including leases and other agreements for consideration, that permit persons to engage in a recreational activity, if the use does not conflict with sound forestry practices or any forest management objective contained in the management plan for the land. The bill also specifies that any person who enters into a lease shall be subject to a forfeiture if the lease presents a conflict with sound forestry practices or the forest management objectives contained in the management plan.

SECTION 16. 77.83 (2) (am) of the statutes is repealed and recreated to read:

77.83 (2) (am) Each owner of managed forest land may enter into a lease, or other agreement for consideration, to allow the land to be used for any purpose, including engaging in one or more recreational activities on the land, if the use does not conflict with any forest management objective contained in the management plan for the land and does not conflict with any sound forestry practice.