



## Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group

[www.millelacswatershed.org](http://www.millelacswatershed.org)

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### TOPIC OF THE MONTH - APRIL 2017

#### **A Plan For Your Forestland**

##### **Planning for your woods, where to start?**

The woods, the back forty, the hunting shack. You know, that place you collect maple syrup in the spring, set up camp in the summer, or search for a grouse in the fall. If you're like many other woodland owners you consider your woods as part of your home, cabin, or farm. It's likely you already have a plan for the woods on your property and maybe that's "I usually cut firewood, watch wildlife, and enjoy walking the trails". For those landowners who want to learn more about their timber, wildlife, soils, and much more you may want to consider getting a Woodland Stewardship Plan.

A Woodland Stewardship Plan is a specific plan designed by a qualified natural resource professional to meet your goals. If you own between 20 and 1,000 acres of land and at least 10 of your acres are wooded, you qualify for a plan. This plan may introduce you to things on your land you've never thought of or have wondered about for a long time. Things like what type of wildlife are present on my property, what species of trees would grow best on my land, how can I control the buckthorn, and is my timber ready to be harvested? The natural resource professional will walk with you through your woods, conduct an inventory while assessing the health of your forest, recommend best management practices, and answer any questions you may have.

##### **Other benefits of having a Woodland Stewardship Plan:**

Wait there's more benefits? Yes. The citizens of Minnesota have for a long time recognized and acknowledged the importance of private forest land and its importance to our environment, economy, and society. Therefore, Minnesota has created a tax incentive program called the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act offering a seven dollar per acre payment per year on your forest land and the 2c Managed Forest Land, a tax reduction program which can lower your property taxes by roughly thirty-five percent. To enroll into one of these programs, you must have a Woodland Stewardship Plan.



Also, now available starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 the MNDNR is offering cost share funding to help you carry out projects on your forestland. Cost share assistance can help with tree and shrub planting, controlling terrestrial invasive species, constructing a non-motorized trail, and even help pay for the cost of your Woodland Stewardship Plan. For more information on DNR cost share assistance contact your local MN DNR Forester at 320-679-3683 for Mille Lacs County, 218-429-3025 for Aitkin County, 218-833-8700 for Crow Wing County, or your local Soil and Water Conservation District.