

RESOLUTION 21-2011

Resolution offered by Forestry and Recreation Committee

RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Forest County, Wisconsin, That

WHEREAS, Forest County recognizes the tremendous importance of the lands contained within the 1.6 million acres of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF) as an exceptional natural resource capable of producing a sustainable supply of timber products on an annual basis to provide economic, social, and biological benefits to Forest County, the State of Wisconsin, as well as the Nation.

WHEREAS, for the most part these lands were purchased from counties where said lands are located under the pretext and commitment that these lands would be returned to a forested condition and that these lands would again provide a sound base for the local and regional economy and that local governments would play a major role in the management and operation of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, and

WHEREAS, the United States Forest Service has failed to consider the negative impact of reduced employment, and loss of local and state tax generation created by the National Forest Service refusal to manage the forest as a sustainable timber resource, and

WHEREAS, the United States Forest Service has failed to recognize the importance of operating the National Forests as a sustainable resource that greatly contributes to the wood, papermaking, packaging, furniture, and building material industries, throughout Wisconsin. This has forced these industries to secure raw materials from outside of the United States, and also caused numerous wood industries to either close or relocate outside of Wisconsin, and

WHEREAS, since there has been a Forest Plan on the CNNF the Forest has never sold the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) in the Forest Plan because of the complex analysis process the Forest Service must go through, and

WHEREAS, the CNNF has significantly reduced the amount of timber available for sale in the past 10 years. Last year the CNNF harvested less than one half of the timber required to maintain forest health. Harvesting levels on the National Forest Lands in both Softwood and Hardwood stands has been reduced significantly nationwide. For example, on the CNNF in Wisconsin with an Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) of 134 million board feet per year, they have averaged harvesting only 75 million board feet per year or approximately 58% of the ASQ. This is down substantially from the average harvested annually in the previous 10 years of 115 million board feet per year or approximately 88% of the ASQ. This translates to reduced revenue to local communities from direct Forest Service payments and a significant reduction in raw materials needed to sustain our forest industry and local economy, not to mention the long term impact on forest health and wildlife, and

WHEREAS, every 20,000 board feet of timber harvested provides enough raw material to sustain 1 job in our forest industry. Last year the CNNF failed to harvest 88 million board feet of timber available for harvest which could sustain 4,400 Wisconsin jobs, and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin loses 1 job for every 100 acres of productive forest land that is excluded from sustainable forest management practices. The CNNF has already excluded 446,000 acres of the forest from timber production which equates to a permanent loss of 4,460 jobs, and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin has lost both paper mills and sawmills, a large number of logging contractors and trucking firms as well as associated employment in our important forest products industry infrastructure. There are a variety of factors that have influenced these losses, but it is evident that the declining harvest on our national forest has played a major role in these losses. Private forests, state forests and county forests have felt ever-increasing pressure to supply raw forest products to replace the void created by declining harvest on our national forests. We must see immediate changes to shift the source of raw material supply to the CNNF soon, or we may lose our remaining forest products industry here in Wisconsin which will result in our inability to practice sound forest management on all of our forestlands, and

WHEREAS, the declining harvest and lack of proper forest management on our national forest lands leads to an array of forest health concerns. Forest health issues on national forests in Wisconsin often spread to adjacent lands including state forests, county forests and privately owned forestlands. Forest pests and diseases do not adhere to ownership boundaries so the lack of management on our national forests may increase forest health issues on adjacent forestland, and

WHEREAS, with the exception of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, all public forests including state forests, county forests and most private forestlands in Wisconsin have received third party certification as being managed on a sustainable basis.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE FOREST COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS recognize that the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest is an exceptional natural resource that has the capacity to provide recreational, social, and economic benefits on a sustainable basis provided that the lands within the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest are properly managed as a sustainable, renewable timber resource, and are managed with consideration to the local units of governments that contain the national forests, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, severe reductions in timber harvesting below sustainable levels within the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest constitutes continuing evidence that the United States Forest Service is unwilling or unable to properly manage the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and that this Board of Supervisors demands that all management of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest revert back to the counties where said forest lands are located by virtue of a breach of promise by the Federal Government and their failure to comply with the Clark-McNary Act, and

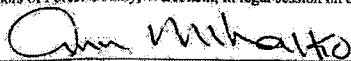
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the CNNF manage their forest land at the ASQ level as identified in the 2004 Forest Plan as well as manage the backlog of unharvested timber (approximately 42% per year) that has not been harvested since implementation of the 2004 Forest Plan, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Forest County requests a written response from the U.S. Regional Forester and CNNF Forest Supervisor within 60 days regarding why these lands are not managed in accordance with the provision of the 2004 Forest Plan, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, copies of this Resolution be presented to President Barack Obama, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, Chief of the Forest Service Thomas Tidwell, U.S. Regional Forester Charles Myers, CNNF Forest Supervisor Paul Strong, Wisconsin Federal Representatives Senator Herb Kohl and Senator Ronald Johnson, Congressmen Sean Duffy, Congressmen Reid Ribble, Governor Scott Walker, each legislator in the Wisconsin Senate and Assembly who represent constituents from Forest County, all towns in Forest County, Forest County Potawatomi Community, Sokaogon Chippewa Community, City of Crandon, Wisconsin Counties Association, Wisconsin County Forest Association. We respectfully request that all counties in Wisconsin take similar action in order to safeguard natural resources that all Wisconsin citizens rely upon for recreation, commerce, employment and energy production, and forward same.

I, County Clerk, in and for the said County of Forest, State of Wisconsin, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of Supervisors of Forest County, Wisconsin, in legal session on the 16th day of August, 2011.

Dated this 16th day of August, 2011.



Forest County Clerk



Supervisor