



Minnesota Forest Resources Council

MFRC Overview | May 7th, 2025

Landscape Program Coordinator
Jaimé Thibodeaux

Applied Forest Science Coordinator
David C. Wilson



MFRC History

- 1989: Environmental Quality Board commissions Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS)
- 1994: GEIS released on timber harvesting and forest management
- Roundtable convened on implementation of GEIS recommendations





Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA) Statute 89A

- Passed in 1995
- Establishes the MFRC
 - Subd 2. Purpose: **“The council must develop recommendations** to the governor and to federal, state, county, and local governments with respect to forest resource policies and practices **that result in the sustainable management, use, and protection of the state's forest resources.”**
 - Creates sustainable forest management programs and tools (e.g., forest management guidelines, regional forest resources plans, and forest resources research)
- Reauthorized in 2023



MFRC Mission



MFRC Mission: Develop recommendations that result in the **sustainable management** of Minnesota's forest resources while protecting the balance of long-term **economic, ecological, and social** values in accordance with the **Sustainable Forest Resources Act**.

Differing Priorities and Perspectives



Photo credits top left to right: Jim Hansen, James Aasen, Charlotte Roy, Jaime Thibodeaux, Nick Jensen; Bottom left to right: Jaime Thibodeaux (first 2), Deb Theisen (last 3)



MFRC Membership

- 17 members
 - 16 Governor appointees
 - 1 Minnesota Indian Affairs Council appointee
- Represented forest stakeholders
 - Commercial logging contractors
 - Conservation organizations
 - County land commissioners
 - Department of Natural Resources
 - Environmental organizations
 - Forest products industry
 - Game species management
 - Labor organizations
 - Minnesota Indian Affairs Council
 - Nonindustrial forest landowners
 - Research and higher education
 - Resort and tourism industry
 - Secondary manufacturing
 - USDA Forest Services



MFRC Staff



Eric Schenck
Executive Director



Elizabeth Hutchison
Program Admin &
Communications
Specialist



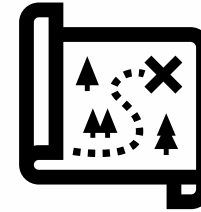
Jaimé Thibodeaux
Landscape Program
Coordinator



David Wilson
Applied Forest
Science Coordinator



Landscape-Level
Planning &
Coordination



Site-Level Forest
Management
Guidelines

Sustainable
Forest Policy



Forest Resources
Research

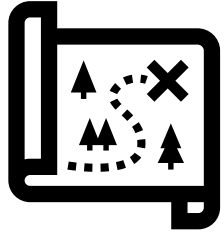
MFRC
Programs



Sustainable Forest Policy

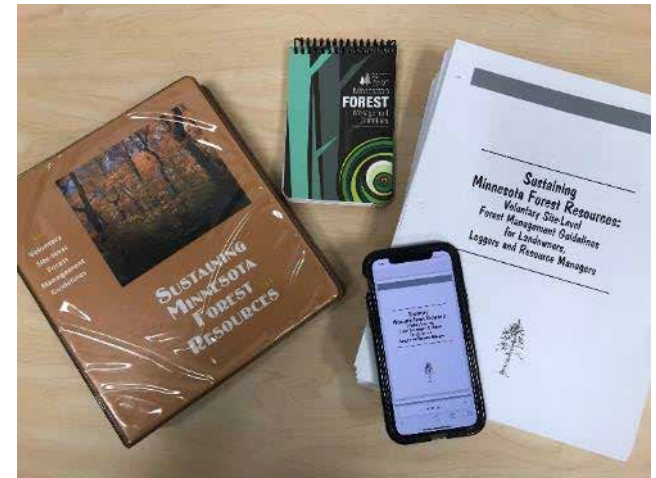
- Make recommendations to:
 - Governor
 - Federal, state, county, and local governments
- Help further Minnesota's economic, environmental, and social goals
- Offer resolutions, position papers, and policy priorities





Site-Level Forest Management

- Develop voluntary guidelines for timber harvesting, sustainable forest management activities
- Conduct guidelines research and assessment
- Advises on monitoring of guidelines implementation
- Supports guidelines outreach and education
- Administer Public Concerns Registration Process



Forest Management Guideline Revisions

MFRC Site-Level
Committee

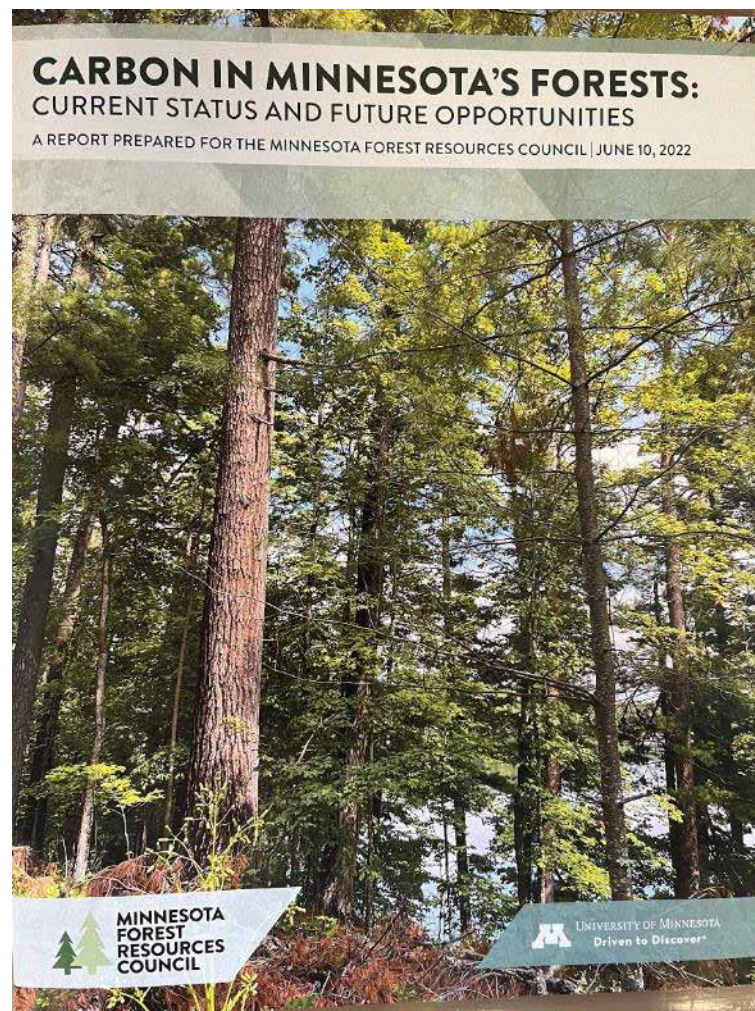
- Climate Change Consideration
- Invasive Terrestrial Plant Species Guidelines
- General Revisions & Clarifications
- Publication in 2025





Forest Resources Research

- Identify and initiate priority forest resources research activities
- Collaborate with state and national scientific community
- Share, assess, and discuss research
- Examples: Forest industry competitiveness study, importance of forests to tourism, engagement of family forest landowners, and Minnesota forest carbon.



Forest Inventory Reveals Increasing Disturbance

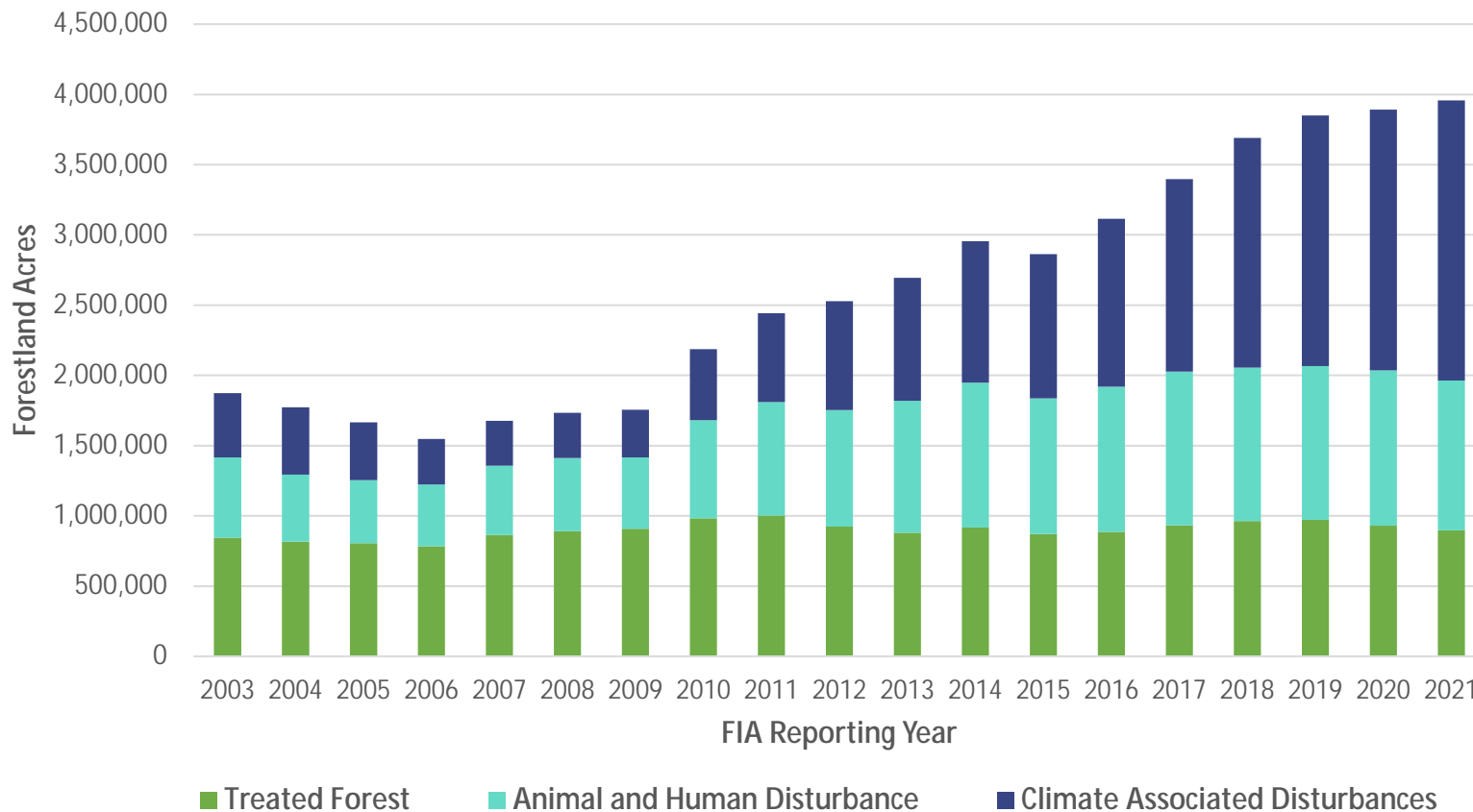
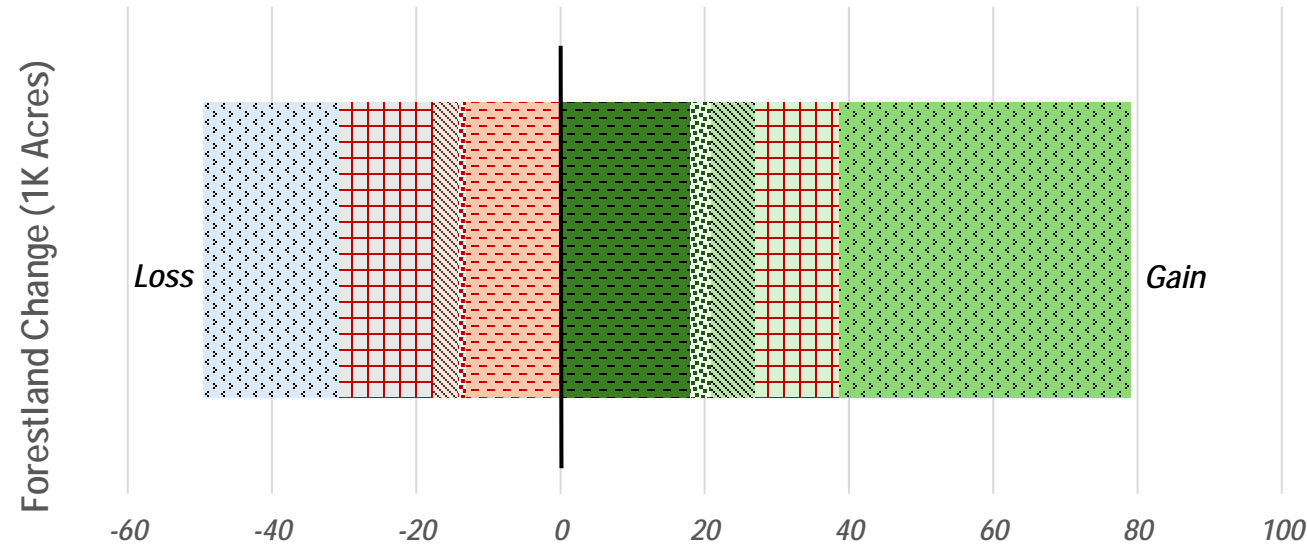


Figure 1. 5-year average forest disturbance trend in Minnesota (2003 – 2021) associated with climate change (insects, disease, wind, fire, drought, flooding, and extreme weather), animal and human disturbance, and intentional treatment or management of the forest.

USDA-FIA 2021 ([EVALIDator 2.1.0 \(usda.gov\)](https://evaluator.forest.fia.gov/))

Forestland Gain and Loss



Net Forestland Gain (2022)

29,600 Acres of Forestland Added

17,722,350 Total Forestland Acres





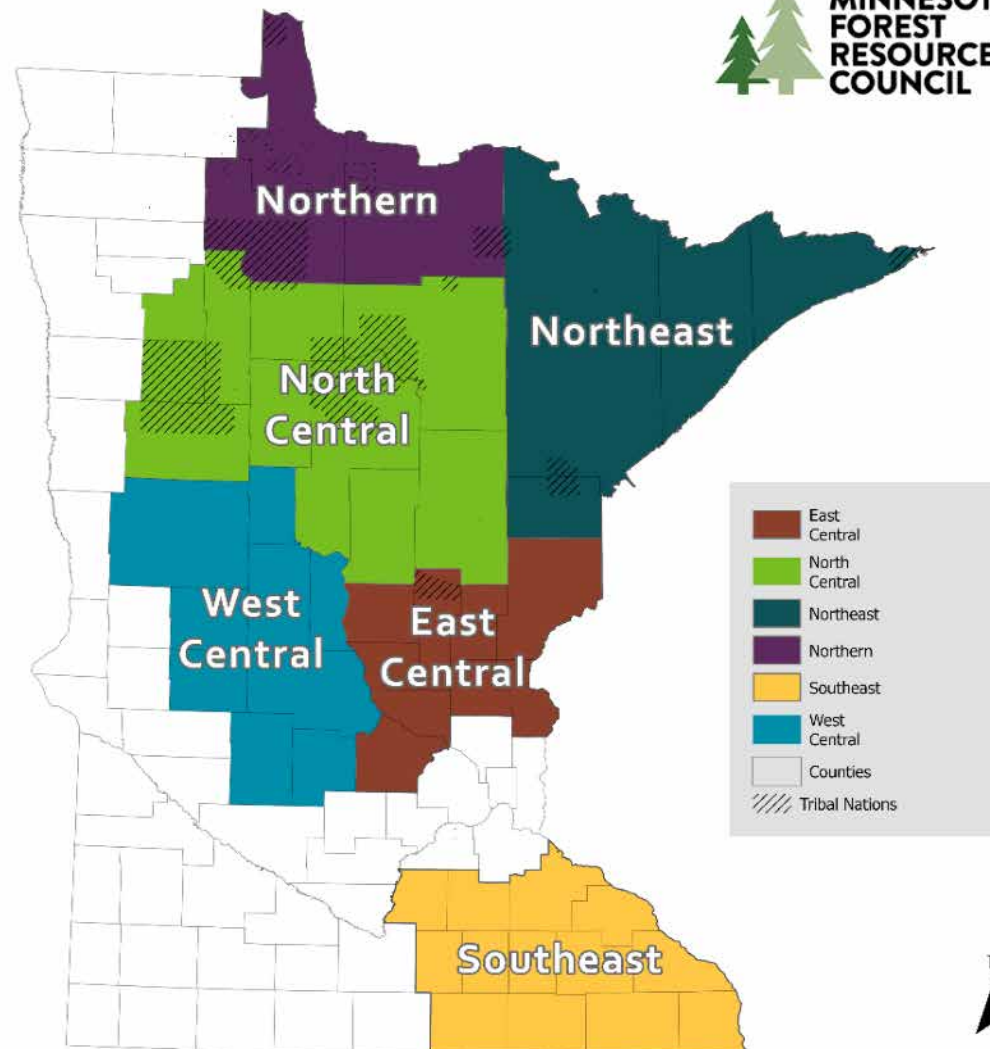
MFRC's Forest Resiliency Recommendations

1. Manage forests to remain vigorous, resilient, and adaptable to climate change.
2. Manage forests to help achieve Minnesota's climate action goals.
 - Keep forestland forested
 - Plant trees and increase forest cover
 - Manage forests when and where appropriate
 - Support forest product markets
 - Use wood-based products instead of high carbon-emitting alternatives
 - Balance ecological, economic, and social benefits
 - Increase use of climate-adapted forest strategies
 - Invest in climate-focused forest research and the development of markets for sustainable forest products



Landscape-Level Planning & Coordination

- Structure for long-range planning and coordination across *all ownerships*
- Open and transparent planning process
- Facilitate coordination between public and private managers
- Forum for diverse perspectives on forest management
- Six locally-led regional forest resources committees



Example: North Central Committee attendees

- Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
- DNR Forestry
- DNR Fish and Wildlife
- DNR Ecological and Water Resources
- Chippewa National Forest
- Ruffed Grouse Society
- Resort Owners
- Dept of Employment and Economic Development
- County land dept (Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard, Becker, Aitkin)
- SWCD's (Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard, Becker, Aitkin)
- UPM Blandin
- Private landowners
- Audubon Minnesota
- The Nature Conservancy
- NRCS
- Consulting Foresters

Regional Landscape Plans

- *All lands and all perspectives approach to natural resource planning*
- *Social, Economic, and Ecological aspects of forestry*



2025

Northern Landscape Plan

A Regional Plan to Guide Sustainable Forest Management



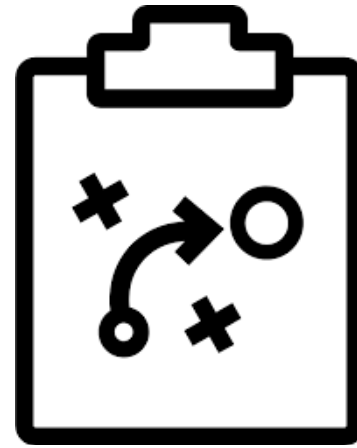
Regional Landscape Plan Benefits



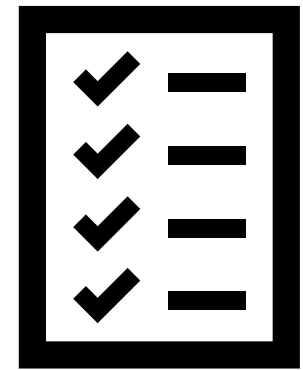
Multi-stakeholder,
multi-resource,
"All-lands"



Voluntary
implementation



Cited by other
plans



Used to meet forest
certification
requirements

Quarterly Meetings



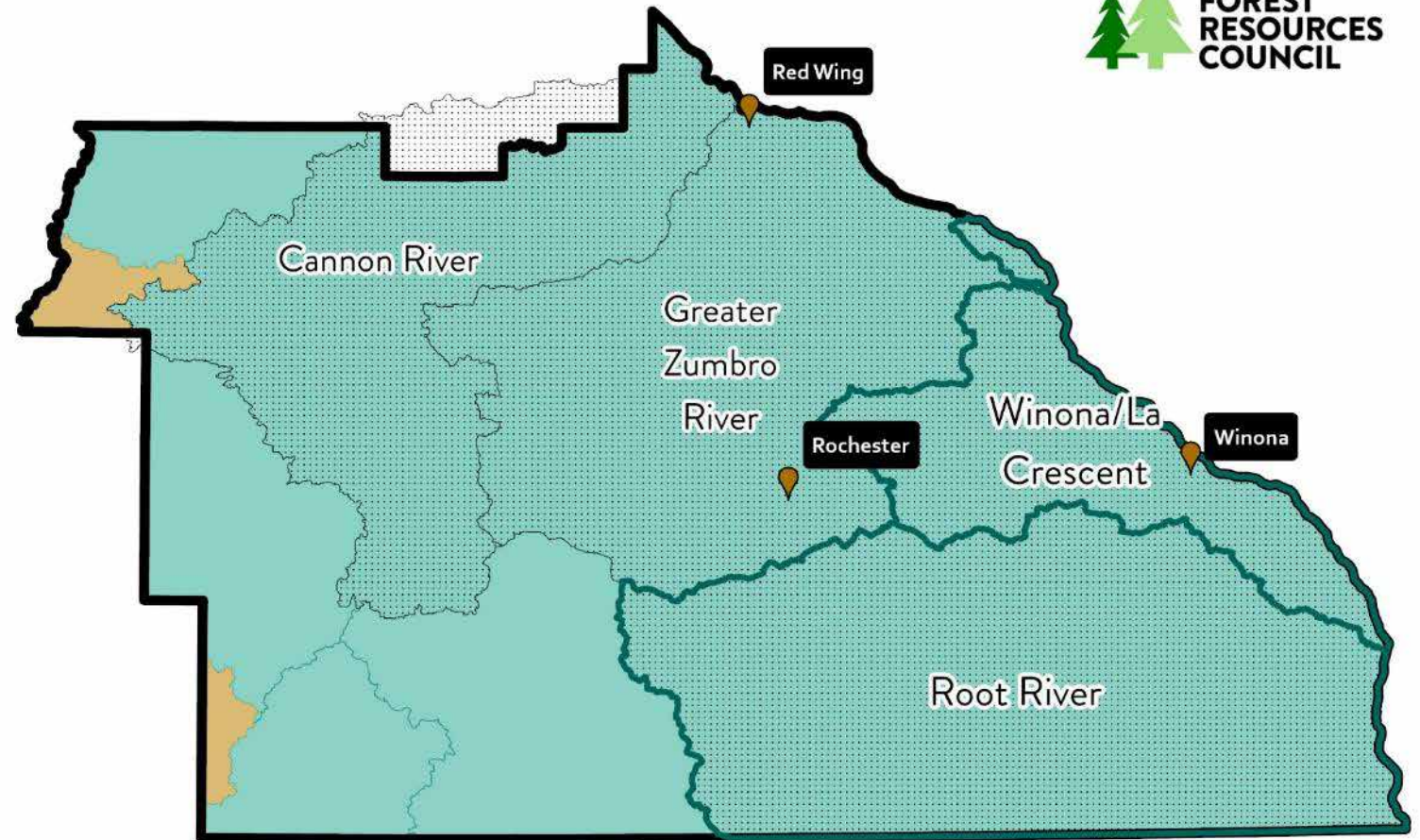
5/19/2025

Benefits of participation

- Access to resource professionals outside of the soil and water health.
- Learn about broader ecological, social, and economic issues.
- Connecting to professionals for coordination and assistance.
- Peer-to-peer learning about emerging issues at a *local level*.



Extra
coordination
point for
watershed-
based work



Watersheds in the Southeast
Region

0 5 10 Miles

1W1P Status

- 1W1P Approved
- 1W1P Planning
- Landscape Stewardship Plans
- Local Forest Technical Team



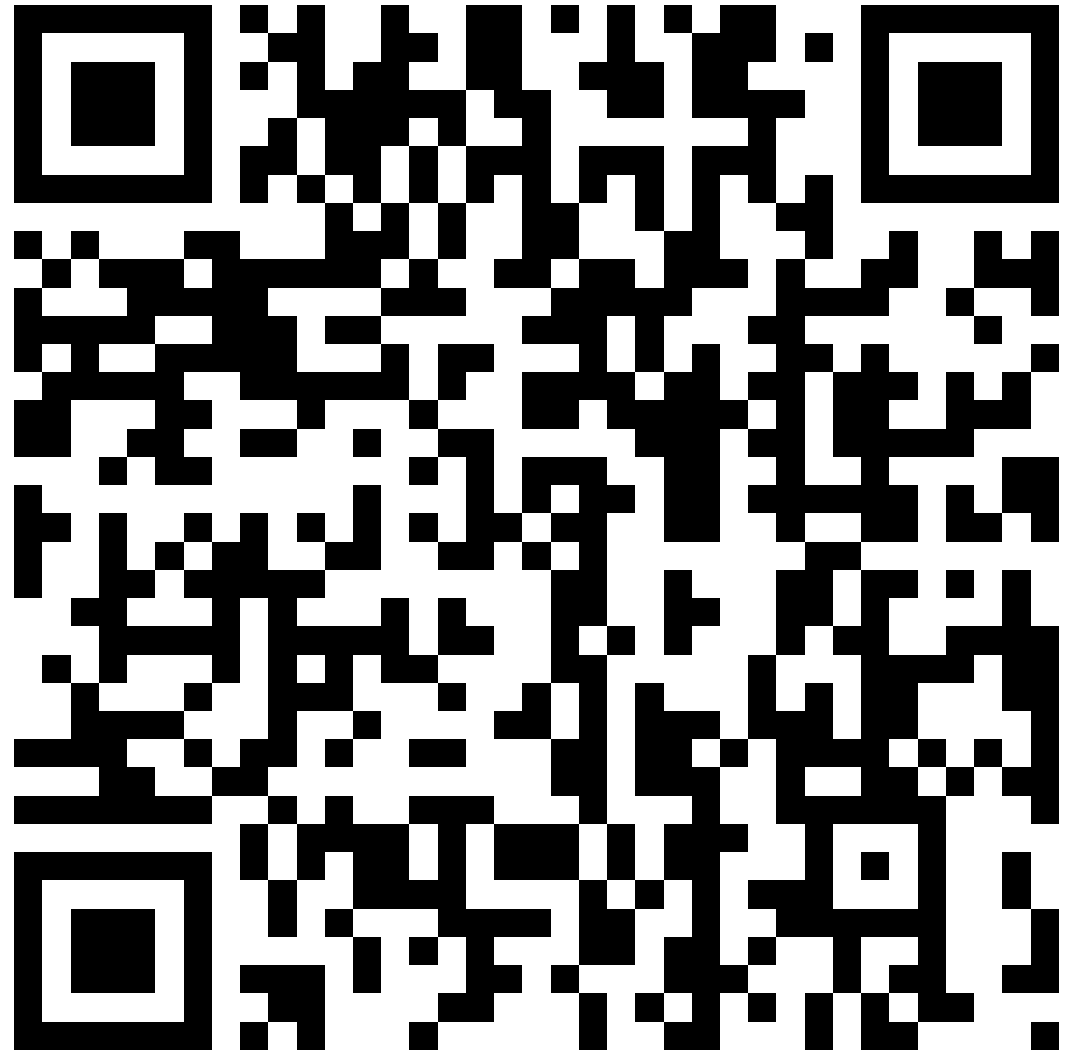


mn.gov/frc/landscape

- Find a copy of the regional landscape plan for each region.
- Check-out forest resource data for each region.
- Connect with the local leader (chair) to be notified of meetings.

Stay in touch!

- Subscribe to our newsletter through Gov Delivery





Questions?

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