



VILAS COUNTY FOREST, RECREATION, & LAND DEPARTMENT

Lawrence L. Stevens, CF - Forest Administrator

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 23, 2010

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AHHH...SPRING IS IN THE NORTHWOODS, AND AN EARLY ONE, TOO!

Wisconsin's Arbor Day is the last Friday of April. What better way to celebrate spring than to plant a tree, which is what the Vilas County Forestry, Recreation, & Land Department is doing—big time!

This year, Assistant Forest Administrator John Gagnon and Forest Technician Jim Jefferson are overseeing the planting of 228,000 tree seedlings on 266 acres of the Vilas County Forest. Superior Forestry, Inc. was contracted for the hand planting which should be completed by the first week of May.

The purpose of the tree planting program is to ensure the regeneration of harvested stands of timber when the desired species are difficult to regenerate naturally. That's one aspect of silviculture. Under Wisconsin's County Forest Law and the standards of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, a certification system of which Vilas County is a member, a period of 5 years is set as a time to regenerate a stand from its harvest.

Speaking of harvests, the annual Spring Timber Sale will be held on 5 May. The Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee will open sealed bids on 18 tracts of timber. Over the past 5 years the value of the Spring Timber Sale has averaged \$400,008.00/year. "Because logging contractors need to plan their work ahead and because of specific conditions that affect the timing of a harvest, such as the presence of species of special concern," stated Lawrence L. Stevens, Forest Administrator, "the completion of a harvest of a tract of timber may take as long as 4 years from its sale."

Spring and the long-awaited warm weather is the time to get outside and to plan for the opening of fishing season (May 1st). According to Dale Mayo, Parks Technician & Snowmobile Trail Program Coordinator, “We have been making repairs at the County’s day-use areas and campsites. The 11 boat landings on the County Forest are ready to go, minus some water, resulting from our 7 year drought.”

The Vilas County Oldenberg Sports Park will be receiving improvements including a concession building, fencing, and additional playing fields this year. These projects will make possible the relocation of the Ball Fields which are presently at the Fairgrounds, making more space available for activities at the Fairgrounds.

The Forestry, Recreation, & Land Committee will conduct a sale of parcels of land taken by the County via the tax deed foreclosure procedure. The sale is by sealed bid and will take place later this summer. This year’s sale will feature several homes as well as vacant lands. After the parcels are officially advertised, Constance Valkenaar, Administrative Secretary, will have detailed information about each parcel, and will answer your questions.

Stevens further noted, “We are now experiencing our 7th year of drought, and conditions are set for a devastating forest fire. Even though the leaves will break bud and our lawns will turn green, our forests can burn. Please give heed to the burning regulations and to Smokey’s warning: “Only You Can Prevent Wildfires.”

For more information on the Vilas County Forestry, Recreation, & Land Department, contact the Department at (715) 479-5160, email at vcfor@co.vilas.wi.us or visit their office on Hwy 45 North (just north of the County Highway Department).

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