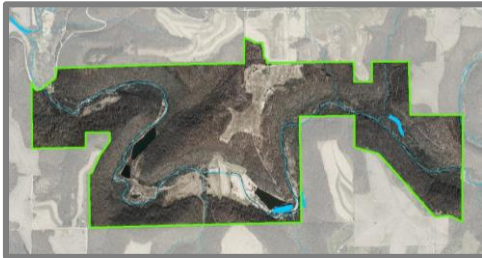


# Vernon County Forest 2021 Annual Work Plan

## Introduction:

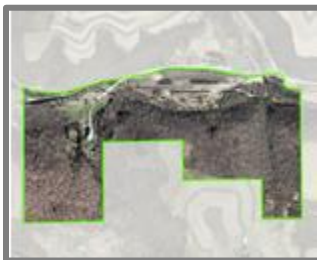


### Duck Egg (Compartment 1)

696 acre tract in Jefferson Township. It is located 10 miles west of Viroqua south of Irish Ridge Road. This compartment is used for timber management, horse-riding, hiking, hunting, fishing, and trapping.

### Kooyumjian – Lost Creek (Compartment 2)

119 acre tract in Union Township. It is located off Pine Avenue, South of County Highway 82, between La Farge and Hillsboro. In the fall of 2002, Tom Kooyumjian Family donated 112 acres of their Certified Tree Farm to Vernon County for addition into the County Forest. This compartment is used for timber management, hiking, hunting, fishing and trapping.



### Esofea – Rentz (Compartment 3)

199 acre tract in Jefferson Township, 9 miles northwest of Viroqua off of County Road B. This compartment is used for timber management, day-use recreation, camping, hiking, hunting and fishing.

### Sidie Hollow (Compartment 4)

512 acre tract in Jefferson & Franklin Townships, 3 miles southwest of Viroqua off County Road XX. This compartment is used for timber management, day-use recreation, camping, fishing, hiking, hunting and mountain biking.



### Jersey Valley (Compartment 5)

A 363 acre tract located in Christiana & Clinton Townships, 4 miles northeast of Westby on County Highway X. This compartment is used for timber management, day-use recreation, fishing, hiking, and hunting.

**References:**

**15-year Comprehensive Land Use Plan:** Implement, amend, and update Vernon County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan to reflect ordinance, boundary, and policy changes as needed.

- 2021-2036 Comprehensive land use plan will take effect starting January 1st of 2021.

**Parks and Forest Ordinance:** Continue to update and administer ordinance including illegal tree stands, unauthorized ATV use, illegal dumping, and other applicable regulations related to the Vernon County Parks & Forest Ordinance.

**Timber Sale Administration:**

Timber sale administration consists of visits to the active timber sale site to scale cut products and assess harvest progress, constraints and damage. We currently have two sold timber sales that will need site visits for log scaling, logger contacts, and other various activities in 2021. It is also important to note Vernon County's triennial audit of the county forest is set to occur in summer of 2021.

**Sold Timber Sales:**

The sales listed below are sold timber sales. Timber sales usually have a two year contract period with revenue expected over the duration of the contract.

Comp.	Stand #	Tract #	Acres	Buyer	Contract Exp. Date
Duck Egg	1,2,3	1-20	83	Rockbridge Sawmill	4-1-23
Sidie Hollow	1,2,3,5,7,18	Not Sold	122	Not Sold	Not Sold
Jersey Valley	3,1,14	1-18	20	Stan Niemyjski	4/1/21
Total			225		

**Timber Sale Planning & Establishment:**

Vernon County Forest has an allowed annual harvest of 40 acres. Our current situation allows us to exceed our goal and complete needed actions on many of our overdue stands. Page three of this report contains a table which represents stands that have a potential for harvest in 2021.

**Planned Timber Sales for Establishment in 2021:**

Compartment Name	Stand(s) #:	Acres
Esofea	8,9,11,12,14, 16,17	53
<b>Total</b>		<b>53</b>

**Other Revenue:**

**Firewood:** Firewood permits are issued when requested. The cost in 2021 will be \$15/cord. There will be a maximum limit of 2 cords per family for personal use.

**Forest Reconnaissance (Recon):**

Data for each stand shall be updated every 20 years, accomplished by collecting data on a minimum of 95 acres (5% of total county forest acreage) per year. A goal has been set to conduct recon at least 10% of our total acreage every year in order to keep up with our 20 year minimum on individual stands.

We have also created a system to include stands not “due” for reconnaissance focusing on individual areas with aging oak with high volume. We have started this project in order to confirm, dismiss, or clean old data. Data received from these stands, set to be collected in 2021, will be our derivative for new timber sales and will be reflected in our harvest planning.

**Stands for Recon Update in 2021 (20 year update requirement):**

Compartment	Stand	Last Exam Year	Acres
Duck Egg	19	2006	5
Duck Egg	21	2006	2
Kooyumjian	2	2006	11
Kooyumjian	3	2006	10
Kooyumjian	5	2006	3
Kooyumjian	7	2006	19
Kooyumjian	8	2006	3
Sidie Hollow	3	2006	4
Sidie Hollow	4	2006	3
Sidie Hollow	9	2006	49
Sidie Hollow	12	2006	29
Sidie Hollow	13	2006	3
Sidie Hollow	14	2006	5
Sidie Hollow	15	2006	5
Sidie Hollow	16	2006	9
Sidie Hollow	17	2006	3
Jersey Valley	2	2006	3
Jersey Valley	4	2006	17
<b>Total</b>			<b>183</b>
<b>Percentage of Total</b>			<b>10.3%</b>

**Timber Stand Improvement (TSI):**

Due to poor to lacking pulp markets and invasive species issues, timber stand improvement (TSI) is often necessary surrounding timber sales in Vernon County. TSI removes pre-commercial and less desirable trees & shrubs to create more growing space for desirable crop trees and regeneration. Develop plan for stands 28, 29, 30, 32 (39 acres) at Duck Egg Compartment once Sustainable Forestry Grants (SFG) are available again for Vernon County Forest to submit applications.

**Pruning:** Pruning is needed in tree plantations to improve quality of future crop trees.

- No pruning is scheduled for 2021 however maintenance pruning is done on an annual basis.

**Prescribed Fire:** Vernon County Forest is equipped with basic prescribed burning equipment, necessary for implementation of grassland and woodland burns. Prescribed burning in grassland situations will be used to maintain and periodically refresh grassland habitat. In prescribed woodland burns, fire will fulfill several objectives, including but not limited to: seedbed preparation, invasive species control and controlling stand composition.

- DNR staff may be available to assist in conducting prescribed burns.
- Post-harvest potential for Rx burn on stand 1 in Jersey Valley for site preparation prior to establishment of supplemental planting. This burn may occur in summer months of 2021, spring burning may be an option if weather permits. This Rx burn will be conducted in a layer of pine duff, this is why it may be suggested to occur after “green-up”.

**Reforestation / Afforestation:**

- Will plant a minimum of 1 acre with left-over seedlings from the county tree sale program.
- Develop afforestation plan for Stand 1 (4 acres) at Jersey Valley Harvest set to occur 2020-2021.
- Biological control (goats) will continue to be a part of our efforts to control invasive species. This project is still in the trial phase, results will be monitored to verify validity of this system.
- Monitor Tree planting in stand 25 of Duck Egg conducted in spring of 2020.

**Forest Protection:**

- Firebreaks will be maintained around all tree plantations and grasslands.
- Acquire signage for posting about firewood movement and the insect/disease spread risk.

**Maintenance of Equipment & Facilities:**

**County Forest Roads:** Monitor rehabilitated roads in Duck Egg previously known as the “Lookout Sale” Maintain forest access roads as needed in 2021. Develop plan for maintaining road in bounds of “Mossy Back” sale during summer of 2021.

**Timber Access Roads:** Development of logging roads will occur as needed in conjunction with timber sale establishment. Focus will be on limiting the amount needed and finding low-cost means of installation.

**Facilities:** Vernon County Forest equipment is stored within the metal shed at Esofea County Park. Maintain facility as needed throughout 2021.

**Wildlife Management Activities:**

**Nickel-an-acre fund:** This is a small fund in Vernon County, and use in 2021 will depend on needs surrounding other habitat projects. Funds must be utilized within three years of allocation.

**Land Purchase/Sales/Exchanges:**

As property within the established blocking boundaries or other areas possessing special and/or unique values are offered for donation or sale, the DNR County Forest Liaison for Vernon County, Vernon County Forest Administrator and Vernon County Land and Water Conservation Committee will assess the merit of county ownership.

- A 1.6 acre parcel of land adjacent to Sidie Hollow has been considered for donation which will improve access from Co. Hwy. X..

**County Forest Boundaries:** Complete re-survey of Sidie Hollow & Jersey Valley properties boundaries completed in 2017 showed many discrepancies with the assumed boundary line.

- Legal work to correct discrepancies began in 2018 but will be an ongoing process in 2021.

**Withdrawal:** No current withdrawals have been discussed at this time.

**Entry:** Vernon County is current on all entry applications at this time. Work to add additional acres into WisFirs database will be completed by early 2021.

**Miscellaneous County Forest Activities:**

**Professional Development:** Attend necessary Wisconsin County Forest Association (WCFA) meetings to stay up to date with issues facing the County Forest Program. Attend DNR sponsored and other training where applicable.

**Public Outreach:** Participation and assistance with local user groups and provide forestry instruction to school groups when requested.

- An entity was recently established within Vernon County to help maintain parks. This Friends of the Vernon County Parks and Forests group will continue to help with tasks through 2021. This (501c3) group will help to maintain trails and other recreation based amenities within our five forested compartments. The expectation of this group is to conduct routine maintenance where feasible under the instruction of the Vernon County Land and Water Conservation Department.

**Grants and Funding:**

**County Forest Project Loan:** Vernon County Forest received a \$730,000 Project Loan from DNR in 2014 to conduct land acquisitions. The small remainder of this funding not utilized for recent acquisitions has been returned to the state. Vernon County will continue to repay our account through 20% of timbersale revenue.

**County Forest Sustainable Forestry Grant:**

- Vernon County will have 2 available open grant periods in 2021 to apply for sustainable forestry funds. These grants will be utilized for items such as timber stand improvement, site preparation, tree plantings, invasive species management, and maintenance. Discussions between the Vernon County Forest Administrator and respective DNR County Forest Liaison, about potential projects, will proceed any application.

**Conservation Aid Grant:** Vernon County will apply for funding through this program in late 2020 for a project to be completed in 2021. Vernon County's Forestry program has received this funding for the last two years. This may warrant an application through our parks staff, and allow for a project not directly related to forestry practices. This will be discussed with the Vernon County Parks Administrator.

**County Forest Road Aids:** Vernon County does not have any catalogued mileage to be considered for funding. The Vernon County Forest Administrator will investigate how to enroll road mileage, to acquire funding for maintenance.

**Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant:** No prospective applications will occur in 2021. Vernon County is currently in the process of renewing blocking boundaries.

**Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Grant:** Vernon County Forest Administrator will apply for funding in 2021.

**National Wild Turkey Federation – Superfund Grant:** Will apply in 2021 to create/improve turkey habitat on the County Forest.

**Ruffed Grouse Society – Drummer Fund:** Will apply in 2021 to receive funding for creating/improving ruffed grouse habitat on the County Forest.

# Vernon County Forest 2021 Annual Work Plan

## Signatures for Approval

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Nick Gilman, Vernon County Forest Administrator  
Land & Water Conservation Department

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Date

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Christine Walroth, Vernon County Liaison Forester  
Wisconsin DNR Forestry Division

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Date

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Mike Finlay, Richland Center Forestry Team Leader  
Wisconsin DNR Forestry Division

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Date

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Aaron Young, Dodgeville Area Forestry Leader  
Wisconsin DNR Forestry Division

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Date

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Eric Zenz, Southwest District Forestry Leader  
Wisconsin DNR Forestry Division

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Date