



# Department Administration

## Carlton County Tax Forfeited Land Management Plan

### 5.I Assessment

Carlton County administers its tax-forfeited land base through its Land Department, Auditor's Office, and the County Board. The County Board sets policies, adopts appropriate ordinances, authorizes land and timber sales, and undertakes similar policy and legal actions. The Auditor sets land and timber values, conducts forfeitures, and handles related legal and fiscal actions.

Day-to-day administration and field management of the land and timber resources is done by the Land Department which is headed by the Land Commissioner who reports directly to the County Board of Commissioners through the County Auditor. The Land Department has a staff of four including the Land Commissioner, a County Forester, a Forestry/Wildlife Tech and GIS Coordinator . Temporary seasonal help may be hired to undertake such projects as tree planting.

#### **Education and Outreach:**

Land Department staff have long participated in a variety of educational programs to help teach children and others about the importance of the forest resource and its proper management. The Department has also from time to time cooperated with other entities in promoting general education efforts about land management, logging practices, and related matters.

The small Department staff size limits its capacity to undertake more rigorous education and outreach efforts on its own.

### 5.2 Policies

**Objective:** *Carlton County desires to possess a professional, competent and adequately funded department overseeing the administration and management of tax-forfeited and other designated lands under County jurisdiction.*

The following are the policies of Carlton County regarding department administration:

1. Maintain a separate Land Department with a Land Commissioner as its chief executive to be responsible for managing tax-forfeited lands and any County-owned lands as determined by the County Board.
2. Maintain a professional staff within the Land Department with the appropriate skills, training and attitude to properly execute the department's management responsibilities.

3. Establish an Ad Hoc Natural Resource Advisory Committee (NRAC) to advise the Land Department on all pertinent matters affecting tax forfeited lands and to facilitate public input on resource management. The Committee should include representatives of resource agencies, loggers, forest industry, township officials, environmental interests, recreation interests, and the general public. A Natural Resource Committee (NRC) is established consisting of one County Commissioner, the County Auditor and the Land Commissioner. The NRC will decide if an issue will be raised to the CLMAC.
4. Support and participate in education programs and initiatives for private non-industrial forest land owners and the general public regarding appropriate forest management.
5. The *Voluntary Site-Level Forest Management Guidelines for Landowners, Loggers and Resource Managers* (February 2005) adopted by the Minnesota Forest Resources Council and as may be modified by Carlton County is included by reference as County policy.
6. Adopt the "Best Management Practices in Minnesota for Water Quality in Forest Management" for use on all management activities on tax-forfeited and County owned land.
7. Ensure that annual general revenues are equal to or greater than annual expenses.
8. All major departmental expenditures must be justified in terms of the benefit(s) they produce. A general objective is to have the dollar value of the benefits equal or exceed the amount expended. However, legitimate non-revenue producing benefits can and must be accounted for thereby potentially creating situations where the dollar value of benefits do not equal or exceed the amount expended.
9. Share costs of resource development, management, infrastructure (e.g.. roads), and other activities wherever possible.
10. Prepare and adopt a Tax-forfeited Land Management Plan including regular annual review, monitoring of implementation, and, within each ten year period, revisions as may be appropriate.

Objective: *Carlton County desires to promote a greater sense of stewardship among the general public towards the natural resources within the county and to foster a sound understanding of the management goals and activities of the Land Department.*

1. Initiate and sustain on-going dialogue with public and private parties directly involved in forest land management in Carlton County.
2. Join or cooperate with the Kettle River Woodland Council, University of Minnesota Forestry Center, and other local and state organizations to sponsor and otherwise participate in events and

activities designed to educate all levels of the general public about land management, the environment, and economic resources.

3. Inform the public about Land Department management goals, activities, sites and other matters through a variety of measures including, but not limited to, brochures, meetings, presentations and project signs.

### 5.3

#### Strategic Actions

Carlton County will undertake the following actions relative to department administration to implement this strategic plan:

1. Institute enhanced land administration techniques including the implementation of a Geographic Information System (GIS), updated aerial photography, and integrated resource maps and databases with other managing agencies.
2. Routinely update the resource inventory.

3. Create a digital database of forest plot information (previously produced by Natural Resource Services, Limited) and integrate it with GIS-based inventory.
4. Create an Ad Hoc County Land Management Advisory Committee and provide staff and support services to operate the committee. Maintain the Natural Resource Committee as determined by the County Board.