

STATE OF MINNESOTA
Office Memorandum

DATE: January 5, 1998

TO: Region Forest Managers, Region Forest Development and Timber Sale
Program Leaders
Area Foresters, Area Forest Development and Timber Sale Program
Leaders

FROM: Gerald A. Rose, Director



SUBJECT: SUMMARY: State Forest Land White Pine Management Policy

In his 3/10/97 letter to legislators, Commissioner Sando stated "The DNR is committed to carry out the recommendations of the December 19, 1996 report of the White Pine Regeneration Strategies Work Group." The following summarizes those recommendations for state land management. Remember that the overall objective of the white pine initiative is to double the acreage of young white pine on all ownerships within seven years. Let's use that as the minimum objective for state land.

WHITE PINE HARVEST OBJECTIVES FOR STATE FOREST LAND

1. When harvesting in the pine cover types, white pine harvesting will be restricted to thinnings, selective harvests, or shelterwood harvests.
2. When harvesting in other forest cover types which contain white pine, adequate seed producing white pine will be retained and treatments (i.e. scarification) carried out to increase white pine natural regeneration. Elimination of white pine from other cover types will not be permitted. An exception would allow harvest of a white pine tree if it poses a hazard to the public or has been severely damaged by natural causes.
3. Reserve the better white pine trees (i.e. dominant, wind firm, etc) that occur as scattered individuals or in small groups for their seed producing, aesthetic, wildlife, and ecological benefits.
4. Manage all white pine under Extended Rotation Forest (ERF) Guidelines to increase the acreage and distribution of older white pine stands and trees on the landscape.

WHITE PINE PROTECTION & REGENERATION OBJECTIVES FOR STATE FOREST LAND

1. White pine management practice priorities at the site level:

First priority: practices that protect and improve the development of existing white pine regeneration.

Second priority: natural regeneration systems to establish white pine. Enhance natural seeding through treatments that create proper microsites for seedling establishment near white pine seed trees when natural or man-made disturbances occur. Treatments could include mechanical scarification or prescribed burns.

Third priority: planting or seeding to regenerate white pine.

2. Each DNR forestry area within the range of white pine should set targets to increase the presence of white pine. Based on current inventory and risk of pest damage, each area should prioritize sites suitable for the establishment of white pine with a goal of establishing at least 25 healthy trees per acre.
3. Plan harvest schedules or other disturbance regimes and time the establishment of new areas of white pine cover type so that the age classes of the white pine resource are distributed more evenly.
4. Successful plantings of white pine will be founded on proper site selection and consideration of the risk of pest damage. White pine should be planted in small groups as well as larger acreages within its range where white pine was once abundant but now is rare or nonexistent. Until there is adequate seed and planting stock, emphasis should be placed on planting white pine in smaller groups within other types.
5. Increase the use of prescribed burning to regenerate white pine.
6. Develop a tending plan (protection from deer, blister rust, weevil and other pests, as well as release from competing vegetation) for white pine regeneration. Walk-away forestry will not suffice for the regeneration and establishment of white pine in Minnesota. Follow-up monitoring and evaluation are essential to the success of establishing white pine regeneration and management for white pine. Monitoring the tending needs beyond initial regeneration surveys is essential to protecting and enhancing previous investments and ensuring success.

WHITE PINE OLD GROWTH OBJECTIVES FOR STATE FOREST LAND

1. In his 3/10/97 letter, the Commissioner made the commitment that existing old growth guidelines will be adhered to in the designation of white pine old growth and future old growth stands. In addition to existing old growth guidelines, the following should guide the management of older white pine stands over 20 acres.
2. Protect selected stands of white pine greater than 20 acres in size in various age classes on state-administered lands to provide for future old growth. Limited harvesting for sanitation and maintenance may be allowed on some of the selected stands to perpetuate the life of the stand and promote regeneration.
3. Protect (maintain) older white pine stands greater than 20 acres in size so that approximately 25% of the acreage of these older stands exceeds 120 years of age. 50% of the acreage of these stands older than 120 years should be maintained as old growth.

CSA FOREST INVENTORY OBJECTIVES

CSA white pine reporting objectives will be: a.) record newly established white pine stands, stand components and clusters as they are established, b.) record existing, but unreported white pine stands, stand components and clusters as they are located and identified.

Changes have been made to the CSA inventory in response to state land white pine management objectives. These changes will allow us to better represent white pine in our CSA database. A white pine cluster symbol is now available to map white pine where it occurs in areas too small (1/2 acre or less) to be inclusions or types. A white pine cluster is defined as 100+ seedlings (0-1" dbh), 50+ saplings (1"-5" dbh), or 25+ pole sized (5"+ dbh) white pines occupying 1/2 acre or less. This symbol may be used for any ownership in the CSA township inventory map. Also available is the significant condition code 9: WHITE PINE CLUSTER(S) PRESENT IN STAND. This code may only be used when there is a stand record in the attribute data - usually state land. These changes will be part of the new CSA manual that will be out in March, 1998.

CLOSING

Most of these objectives are just refinements of existing (current) practices. As such, we should be able to aggressively pursue these objectives in demonstrating to the forestry and environmental communities that we are serious about white pine management. It is an expectation of these communities that the Division of Forestry demonstrate its leadership in increasing the presence of white pine in Minnesota.

CC: Rodney Sando, Roger Holmes, Bill Morrissey, Bob Tomlinson, Bruce ZumBahlen, Barry Morse, Bill Berndt, Bob Pajala, Gaylord Paulson