

BRAINERD DISPATCH

Cass County to develop updated forest resources management plan

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The Cass County Board recently approved a contract to develop a 10-year update to the county's forest resource management plan.

The plan will address the 255,000 acres of tax-forfeited land administered by the Cass County Land Department. The updated plan is anticipated to be completed in 2020, following opportunities for public input and a public comment period.

The mission of the Cass County Land Department is to professionally manage the County's forestland base within the confines of Minnesota Statutes 282 and to improve the quality and value of the county's forestland resources. Department activities include wildlife management, sale of timber, reforestation, forest inventory, easements, and management coordination with state and federal resource management agencies.

The 255,000 acres administered by the land department represent about 20% of the county's total area. About three-quarters of the tax-forfeited land is forested. The area under management also includes brush lands, water, and developed uses such as forest roads and gravel pits. The most common forest cover type is aspen. There are also spruce-fir, pine, oak, birch, and other northern hardwood forest types managed by the county. The Cass County Land Department has been third-party certified by the Forest Stewardship Council for responsible forest management since 2001.

In addition to addressing forest resource management, the updated plan will provide guidance in the management of recreational trails. The plan will also address various land use related policies, including the general land base policy, leases, easements and use permits. Timber harvesting as well as the policies and permit requirements for non-timber forest products such as maple syrup tapping, balsam bough and birch bark collection, and firewood are also included in the plan.

The current Cass County Forest Resources Management Plan was completed in May 2010 and is available at the land department's website.

Source: <https://www.brainerddispatch.com/news/government-and-politics/4665506-Cass-County-to-develop-updated-forest-resources-management-plan>