



February 13, 2013

Senate Natural Resources, Environment & Great Lakes Committee

Dear Committee,

Please accept this letter as our testimony regarding Senate Bill 78 and the Department of Natural Resources' Living Legacies/Biodiversity Stewardship Area Program(BSA). We fully support SB 78.

The forest products industry employs 150,000 people and contributes \$12 billion to the State's economy each year. We are part of that, currently operating 2 manufacturing facilities in Michigan, Newberry & Sagola. The health and sustainability of Michigan's forests are critical to our success both now and in the future.

We continually see an erosion of the forest acreage available for harvest through the practice of sustainable forest management. Keep in mind that sustainable forest management does include the principles that help provide diversity, including considerations for wildlife, water quality, plants, recreation and timber. Whether this loss of available acreage is due to legislation, regulation, policy, or other factors, it inhibits the ability of current and future generations to sustainably manage forests, and economically compete in the market place.

Currently the Department of Natural Resources is developing forest management plans, for the 3 regional areas of ownership. These plans, open at this time for comment as well, itemize over a million acres of ownership that have no management activities planned. While we applaud the department for working to develop a plan for the future it would seem wise to assess those acres designated as unavailable for management in the Regional Plans, and how they contribute to the BSA principle.

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Additionally there are many acres of federal, mainly Forest Service lands, either set-aside from management or severely restricted from consideration. These acres coupled with private ownerships that are managed for the same biological diversity outcomes should be considered in the grand scheme of any goal.

Currently, according to the Forest Service's, Forest Inventory & Analysis(FIA), 2011, we are seeing timber mortality rates on State owned land of 91% of removals. In other words for every cord of wood harvested and utilized we have almost another cord dying and lost to the economy. We should be working toward increasing management options, not reducing them.

We aren't suggesting that capturing all mortality is possible, or good for that matter, but the ratio does appear to be out of reasonable order. Stepping back and looking at all the facts and pieces involved, it is our opinion that SB 78 is the best way to achieve a reasonable end result and we, again, fully support.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Jon Lamy  
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