

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill makes various changes and updates to the Minnesota Sustainable Forest Resources Act.

Section

- 1** **Policy.** Amends § 89A.02. Updates the policy of the Minnesota Sustainable Forest Resources Act to include maintaining (as well as establishing as required under current law) processes and mechanisms that seek and incorporate a broad array of perspectives when planning and managing the state's forest resources.
- 2** **Membership.** Amends § 89A.03, subd. 1. Requires the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) member representing owners of nonindustrial, private forests of 40 acres or more to be a representative of an association representing family forest woodlands.
- 3** **Biennial report.** Amends § 89A.03, subd. 6. Changes the Minnesota Forest Resources Council's annual report requirement to a biennial report due February 1, each odd numbered year.
- 4** **Partnership.** Amends § 89A.04. Updates the state's policy regarding fostering partnerships between landowners, forest managers, and loggers to require the partnerships to be maintained and also to include loggers when addressing landscape-level operations and concerns.

Section

- 5 **Development and revision.** Amends § 89A.05, subd. 1. Requires the MFRC to periodically revise comprehensive timber harvesting and forest management guidelines and provides new criteria to be used when doing so (the current criteria, including peer review requirements, are repealed in section 18).
- 6 **Application.** Amends § 89A.05, subd. 3. Requires the MFRC to periodically assess implementation goals for the forest management guidelines it develops and requires those goals to sustain forest resources.
- 7 **Framework.** Amends § 89A.06, subd. 1. Requires the MFRC to maintain a framework that will enable long-range strategic planning and coordination (the current act requires it to be developed).
- 8 **Regional forest resources committees.** Amends § 89A.06, subd. 2. Requires the MFRC to maintain regional forest resource committees (the current act requires them to be established) and modifies their duties, including adding that they periodically recommend that the MFRC undertake revisions of the region's landscape plan.
- 9 **Report.** Amends § 89A.06, subd. 4. Requires each regional committee to report on its activities by November 1, each even numbered year.
- 10 **Monitoring.** Amends § 89A.07. Requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to maintain a program for monitoring trends and conditions in the state's forest resources and removes a requirement that the DNR report to the council on current information and trends. Changes the responsibility of evaluating the effectiveness of practices to mitigate impacts of timber harvesting and forest management activities from the DNR to the MFRC.
- 11 **Establishment.** Amends § 89A.08, subd. 1. Requires the chair of the MFRC to appoint the chair of the Forest Resources Research Advisory Committee.
- 12 **Purpose.** Amends § 89A.08, subd. 2. Updates the purpose of the Forest Resources Research Advisory Committee to include communication with the legislature on funding the council's priority forest resources research activities.
- 13 **Research assessment.** Amends § 89A.08, subd. 3. Technical.
- 14 **Interagency information cooperative.** Amends § 89A.09. Encourages the dean of the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources Sciences at the University of Minnesota to maintain an Interagency Information Cooperative (the current act encourages its establishment) and modifies the cooperative's purpose by removing conducting a needs assessment for improving the information systems. Requires the cooperative to report to the council on its accomplishments by November 1, each even-numbered year.

Section

- 15** **Continuing education.** Amends § 89A.10. Updates the policy of the state to include the encouragement of timber harvesters and forest resource professionals to maintain (the current act encourages the establishment) continuing education programs and adds specific reference to the Minnesota Logger Education Program and the University of Minnesota Sustainable Forests Education Cooperative.
- 16** **Implementation.** Amends § 89A.105. States that implementation of the Minnesota Sustainable Forest Resources Act is subject to appropriations from the legislature.
- 17** **Sunset.** Amends § 89A.11. Extends the Minnesota Sustainable Forest Resources Act four years to June 30, 2021.
- 18** **Repealer.** Repeals § 89A.05, subd. 2a (requirements for reviewing timber harvesting and forest management guidelines, including peer review requirements) and subd. 4 (requirement of the DNR to monitor and report on riparian forests), and § 89A.06, subd. 2a (obsolete reporting requirements related to the regional forest committees).