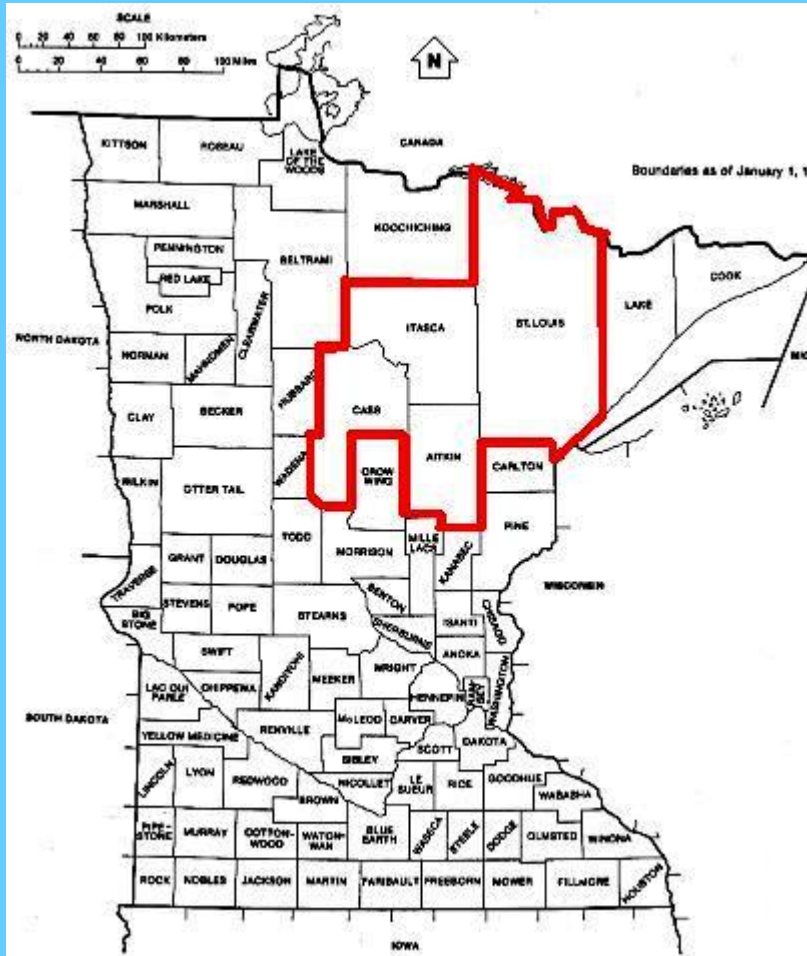


Certifying Family Forest Lands: Are Landowners Ready for It and Can We Deliver It to Them?

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Background

- **Family forest owners:**
 - Lack awareness of forest certification
 - Have little interest in certifying their land
 - Providing additional information about the benefits of certification does little to change their minds
 - See no benefits in having small acreages certified
 - Generally don't have management plans
 - Are concerned about loss of control of their land



Source: Kilgore et al. (2005)

Study Objectives

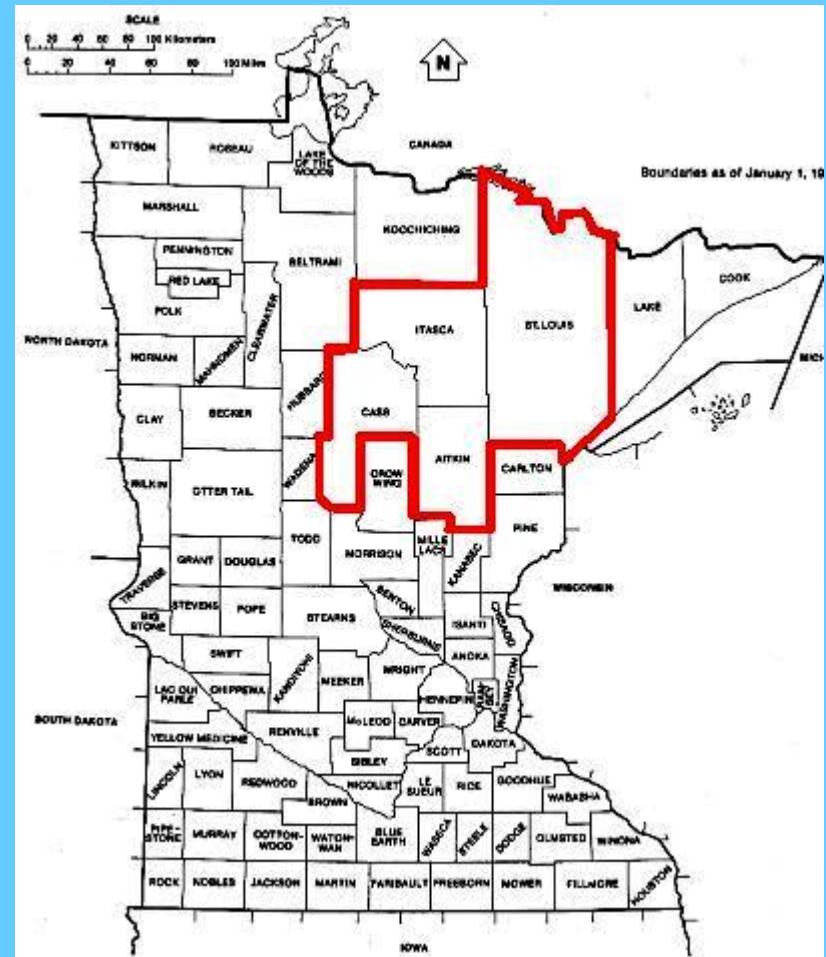
- **Identify characteristics of family forest owners who are active forest managers**
- **Assess the relationship between owner characteristics and interest in forest land certification**
- **Identify opportunities for and barriers to certification**

Characteristics of Active Forest Managers

- Identified characteristics which were reported to have (+) or lack (0) a relationship with active forest management
- Fourteen explanatory variables and eight “strong” drivers identified
 - Acreage (+)
 - Economic incentives (+)
 - External control (+)
 - Management plan (+)
 - Organization (+)
 - Professional assistance (+)
 - Reason(s) for owning (+)
 - Timber harvest (+)
 - Age (0)
 - Agricultural occupation (0)
 - Distance (0)
 - Education (0)
 - Income (0)
 - Length of ownership (0)

Relationship between Owner Characteristics and Interest in Forest Land Certification

- **Develop a model to predict the likelihood of enrollment of northern Minnesota landowners in a forest land certification program**



Relationship between Owner Characteristics and Interest in Forest Land Certification (continued)

- **Only “economic incentives” and “external control” were statistically significant predictors of interest in certifying forest land**
 - **Respondents were 2.5 times more likely to have their forest certified if they believed they would receive a price premium for their harvested timber**
 - **Respondents were 2.8 times more likely to have their forest certified if the certification program is administered by a forest landowner organization**

Opportunities for and Barriers to Certification

- **Separate focus groups conducted with 1) DNR service foresters, 2) industry procurement foresters, 3) forestry consultants, and 4) Extension foresters**
 - **Develop a “best set” of key characteristics to consider when identifying family forest owners most likely to have their forestland certified**
 - **Identify potential barriers to increasing the number of certified family forestland acres**

Opportunities for and Barriers to Certification (continued)

- Most common characteristic identified by focus group participants of a landowner most likely to certify:
Landowners in a forestry or natural resource-related organization or cooperative



- No agreement on a second common characteristic of a landowner most likely to certify

Opportunities for and Barriers to Certification (continued)

- Forest certification
 - Doesn't draw landowners to respond to newsletters or to attend education programs
 - Rarely comes up in conversations with landowners
 - Will require economic incentives
 - Perceived to be a governmental program
 - Needs to shift advertising messages from forest management to wildlife management
 - Should be tied in with other assistance programs (FSP, SFIA) to minimize enrollment workload

Opportunities for and Barriers to Certification (continued)

- Barriers identified
 - Does not align with goals of average owner
 - Presence of multiple certification systems is confusing
 - High costs relative to financial benefits
 - Most landowners don't have management plans
 - Certifying small parcels individually isn't cost-effective
 - Not well-understood by some foresters
 - Increases workload for foresters
 - Some foresters believe that certification is for PR
 - Need framework to guide landowners and foresters

Opportunities for and Barriers to Certification (continued)

- Potential approaches identified to increase enrollment
 - Promote program to members in forest landowner organizations
 - Simplify the enrollment process to make it easier to understand
 - Align certification with landowner goals
 - Provide market-based incentives

Summary

- Most family forest owners
 - Have no interest in paying for certification
 - Perceive certification to be a government program and therefore are very reluctant to participate
- Many existing institutional barriers need to be overcome