

February 27, 2012

Senator Van Wanggaard
Chair, Committee of Labor, Public Safety & Urban Affairs
Room 319 South
State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

Cc: Members, Committee of Labor, Public Safety & Urban Affairs

RE: Senate Bill 444

Senator Wanggaard,

Wisconsin Consulting Foresters (WCF) is a 501.c.6 non-profit trade association whose members provide professional forestry services to clients throughout Wisconsin. WCF provides a voice for forestry professions that serve the small woodland owners of Wisconsin. Members of WCF contribute greatly to the continued growth and development of forest management practices and policies throughout the State. We thank the Senate Committee on Labor, Public Safety and Urban Affairs for the opportunity to comment on 2011 Senate Bill 444 and its amendment.

Wisconsin Consulting Foresters (WCF), following review of 2011 Senate Bill 444 and its amendment, find potential for the Bill to have significant negative impacts on forest management and all wood dependent industries. The broad language utilized in 443.01 (6s) (Section 98) may create significant conflict with natural resource management professions that conduct field delineations as well as mapping of those delineations. Professional foresters, as well as other natural resources professions, have historically utilized mapping as the most effective method to portray natural resource features present on land ownerships. Mapping of these resources is done for inventory purposes, planting purposes, site preparation purposes, and timber harvesting purposes. These maps have never been construed or misinterpreted as representing work or mapping performed by professional land surveyors. While forest mapping technology has improved significantly through the use of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geographical Information Systems (GIS), these tools have not been suggested as replacing the precision work of professional land surveyors. Professional foresters, as well as other natural resources fields, must be allowed to continue mapping of natural resources features on private lands free of potential inclusion under 443.01 (6s).

The broad language in 443 (6s) (a) threatens significant financial hardship for private forestry providers as well as small woodland owners seeking to manage their forest. The inclusion of "Any service comprising the establishment or reestablishment of the boundaries of one or more tracts of land..." (page 39, lines 11 & 12) as well as 443 (6s) (d) "Preparing maps that depict any interest in real property in par. (a) for the purpose of establishing the boundaries of such interest in real property." (page 40 lines 1, 2 & 3) would require all forestry field work and mapping to be conducted by a professional land surveyor. These requirements would significantly raise the cost of rural woodland management and significantly delay the delivery of

forestry services by professional foresters. Forest management on the largest acreage of woodland in Wisconsin would be significantly reduced due to the burdensome requirement and significant cost to survey all boundary lines. Forest management on small woodland ownerships would become uneconomical and thus significantly reduce the wood supply for Wisconsin's forest products industry. Professional foresters must be permitted to continue to deliver woodland management services free from inclusion under 443.01 (6s).

Wisconsin Consulting Foresters (WCF) respectfully requests that the Committee consider clarifying language that **excludes** Professional Foresters and other Natural Resource Management Professionals from inclusion in the scope of 443.01 (6s) of 2011 Senate Bill 444 and its amendments. Foresters and Natural Resource Managers must be able to perform their work without encumbrance under 443.01 (6s). WCF would suggest the following language be included under Section 123:

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit any Professional Natural Resource Manager from performing field delineations or mapping thereof for the purposes of natural resource management.

Wisconsin Consulting Foresters (WCF) recognizes the positive efforts of professional land surveyors in advancing the standards of their profession through 2011 Senate Bill 444 and its amendments. Seeking to improve and police one's profession is an honorable and desirable process and goal, one in which WCF strives for as well. We support the profession of surveying in Wisconsin and its desire to realize higher standards in both personnel and product, but not at the inclusion of other professions that have historically been close partners with professional surveyors. Professional foresters and professional surveyors have historically worked closely to provide the public with the level of service dictated by the client and need. We anticipate a continued close working relationship between foresters and surveyors through the mutual respect of the role each plays in fulfilling land management needs in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Kim Quast
Chair, Wisconsin Consulting Foresters