

# School and Community Forests—1957

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**We have new school forests, and school consolidation results in larger ones. Registrations by counties and clubs are not coming in as they once did.**

For the first time in 15 years, since school and community forest registrations by the Conservation Department were reported beginning in 1942, net additions to these purely local public forests fell below the thousand-acre mark. New school forests remain close to the average number per year. Lessened activity on the part of counties in designating forestry uses for detached tracts of county-owned lands represents the principal reason for the decline in net acreage of newly-established community forests.

**AS INDICATED** on the "box score," Wisconsin had 393 registered school and community forests with a total area of 95,893 acres registered with the Wisconsin Conservation Department on July 1, 1957.

In this state the term "community forest" has a specific meaning which may not be identical with the interpretation of the term "community forests" elsewhere. For instance, county-owned land that is entered under the Wisconsin forest crop law, and draws state aid, is not considered a community forest. Community forests are classified here as any areas consisting of 20 acres or more dedicated primarily for forestry purposes, owned by a school district, a village, a town, a city, or a county (provided the county land is not under forest crop law) and quasi-public bodies such as the American Legion, Isaac Walton League, or sportsmen organizations whose articles of incorporation permit them to hold title to property. There is a growing acreage of county-owned land which for one reason or another is not eligible for

entry under the forest crop law, which county boards, by official action, are designating community forests.

The Wisconsin Conservation Department gives assistance to the bodies which own community forests. Free trees are furnished for planting on these forests. District foresters of the department have assisted in the mapping of a number of school and community forests and have advised with local administrative officials in the proper management of the land, including planting where necessary. A state law requires that any community forest must be registered with the Conservation Department before any of this assistance can be obtained from the state. The extension forestry office of the College of Agriculture at Madison, at the request of the Conservation Department, receives and records the official registrations.

**THE WISCONSIN** statutes provide that school districts, villages, towns, cities, and counties may acquire property for forestry purposes and may appropriate funds from their treasuries for forestry work.

No school system in the state has made more intensive use of its school forest than that of the city of Merrill on its 732-acre forest. Beginning with the primary grades, and extending through high school, every student in the Merrill schools at some time during the school year learns something of what occurs in this forest, through any one of the several areas of study which make up the curriculum of the city schools. Full information on this pioneering effort in the full use of a school forest may be had

through the Merrill superintendent of schools.

Superior has the largest city forest in the state, consisting of 4,500 acres. It also has the distinction of being the largest city-owned forest in the United States located entirely within the limits of a city.

Officially registered school forests as of July 1, 1957, totalled 323, having a total area of 23,874 acres. Consolidation of some school districts in the northern part of the state has caused a small reduction in the number of separately-owned school forests, although the acreage has increased. Where several schools unite to form a single district the title to the several tracts of school forest land is invested in the one district, and the several forests are thereafter considered one school forest.

Forty-six of the state's 71 counties now have school forests. Rusk county, with 34 school forests, has the greatest number, totalling 1,711 acres in area, but Oneida county with 2,192 acres in school forests is first in point of acreage. There are 20 school forests in Oneida county. The largest school forest is in Vilas county, the 811-acre Winegar school forest.

The town of Sterling, in Polk county, has the largest town forest in Wisconsin, 4,125 acres in extent. The town of Peck, in Langlade county, is second with 2,240 acres.

Marinette county now operates the largest county forest unit comprised of land not classed as county forest crop land and therefore not drawing state aid. This forest consists of approximately 8,100 acres. Brown, Dunn, Sauk, Juneau, La Crosse, Marathon, Monroe, and Outagamie counties have substantial county and community forests.

As of July 1, 1957 there were registered with the Conservation Department 70 community forests other than school forests having an area of 72,509 acres.

#### COMMUNITY FOREST BOX SCORE

July 1, 1957

	No. Forests	Acreage
Community Forests Previously Registered .....	382	95,021
New Registrations:		
Chester School Forest, Adams County .....		40
Superior State College .....		70
Dorchester High School Forest, Clark County .....		80
Forestview School Forest, Langlade County .....		40
Ladysmith Future Farmer Forest .....		40
Thorp Public School Forest, Clark County .....		80
Owen-Withee Public School Forest, Clark County .....		80
Marshfield High School Forest, Wood County .....		240
Granton High School Forest, Clark County .....		80
St. Mary's School, Hurley ..		40
McKinley School Forest, Polk County .....		40
Brunswick School Forest, Eau Claire County .....		25
Total New Registrations	12	855
Community Forests Reduced or Discontinued:		
Shiocton School Forest, Outagamie County .....		40
Additions (acreage) made to previously registered Community Forests:		
Tomorrow River School, Amherst .....		20
Eau Claire Kiwanis Club Forest .....		37
Net Increase (acreage) .....		57
Total Net Acreage Increase .....		872
Net Totals .....	393	95,893

#### Necessity Demonstrated—Once Again

Illinois is having a deer-hunting season in 1957, not because it is another form of sport for the nimrod, but because it has become biologically necessary to harvest a percentage of the herd.—LYNN CALLAWAY in *Outdoor America*