

History of Goodman Forest

- Goodman Lumber Company was the first privately owned forest company in Wisconsin to adopt sustained yield.
- In 1927, after passage of Wisconsin's Forest Crop Law a year earlier, R.B. Goodman, secretary of the Goodman Lumber Company, decided to turn to sustained yield (managing lands for permanent timber production) and selective cutting, abandoning clear cutting except for some isolated blocks of timber.
- In 1932, the company's holdings consisted of 60,000 acres of timberland and about 20,000 acres of cutover land. The company used spurs from its main logging railroad to log selected tracts of timber. It cut only mature trees or those showing signs of decay and injury. After completing its operations, the company pulled up the spur tracks to use elsewhere. The right of way became a fire lane. In ten years, the tract was ready for a second cutting. One writer commented that: "They have worked out and are now perfecting one of the finest examples of correct forestry practice in the entire United States."
- In 1934, James W. Girard, assistant director of Forest survey, U.S. Forest Service, examined the Goodman forest and wrote the following to C.A. Goodman, president of the Goodman Lumber Company: "Your forest practice is absolutely the finest I have seen anywhere in the entire country. I do not know of any operation that looks as good as your area. I have had an opportunity to see most of the selective logging in this country. Your job, when compared with all other operations which I have seen, stands out as the model operation."
- When the Goodman Lumber Company sold its operation to Calumet & Hecla Inc. in 1955, it owned 70,000 acres of timberland that it managed under selective cutting. The transaction included a stipulation that the new owners continue sustained-yield forestry for 20-30 years under the provisions of the Forest Crop Law.
- The eighth cutting cycle on the original Goodman Lumber Company land took place in 1999. From 1927 through 1999, 417 million board feet of timber had been removed. Yet the tract still contained about the same volume of timber that it had in 1927.
- R.B. Goodman was inducted into the Wisconsin Forestry Hall of Fame in 1984 for his role as a leader in forest tax reform, rural zoning, and industrial forestry.

Sources:

Glad, *History of Wisconsin*, 209; Randall E. Rohe, "Goodman: The Company Town That Outlived the Company," *Voyageur: Northeast Wisconsin's Historical Review* 19 (Summer-Fall 2002): 33-37.

One Hundred Years of Wisconsin Forestry: 1904-2004, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, Inc., 2004, pgs. 48, 122