

# Headwaters Forestry Cooperative Offers Benefits for Family Forest Owners

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## CASE STUDY: CERTIFICATION IN MINNESOTA

The Headwaters Forestry Cooperative, a group of landowners in Northern-Central Minnesota, is committed to enacting responsible forest management and providing quality goods to the public. The co-op consists of 30 members, owning roughly 2,750 acres of forestland.

Headwaters maintains a goal of “trying to improve the conditions of our local forests, our local community and our local watersheds,” a mission that retains the importance of environmental responsibility at its heart. By doing so, the members of the group ensure that those working in the group provide products harvested in a responsible manner. In addition, they strive to protect the natural surroundings in Northern Minnesota.

The importance of these practices cannot be overlooked, as the

co-op members manage lands within a unique area of mixed hardwoods between prairies and the pine forest in central Minnesota.



**The Mississippi River is a valuable resource and water quality is an important benefit of well-managed forests.**

This unique environmental area means that responsible management becomes even more vital, and the practices of the co-op maintain part of the pristine natural beauty in the state.

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Members of the co-op receive a variety of benefits. Headwaters offers high-quality technical support, a growing network of foresters with similar goals, and ideals.

In addition, Headwaters has sponsored workshops and other educational sessions to help share information about responsible forestry practices with their members and also with customers of the co-op to help them understand what kinds of products are available. These kinds of activities help promote the success of the members and increase the use of materials from responsibly managed forests.

Several Headwaters Co-op members have their forestland certified as meeting the standards of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). To reduce the costs and record keeping responsibility of certification for each landowner, the landowners are able to have their land certified through the services of an FSC-Certified

Resource Manager. By utilizing FSC standards, the members increase their credibility and accountability to the public.

The co-op provides an example of responsible forest management on family forestland in North-Central Minnesota. By working with a number of partners including environmental learning centers, public land managers, non-profit organizations, and educators, the co-op is able to network with a wide range of resources and information.

Through cooperatives like Headwaters, landowners can work together to make a difference in utilizing responsible management in Minnesota.

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