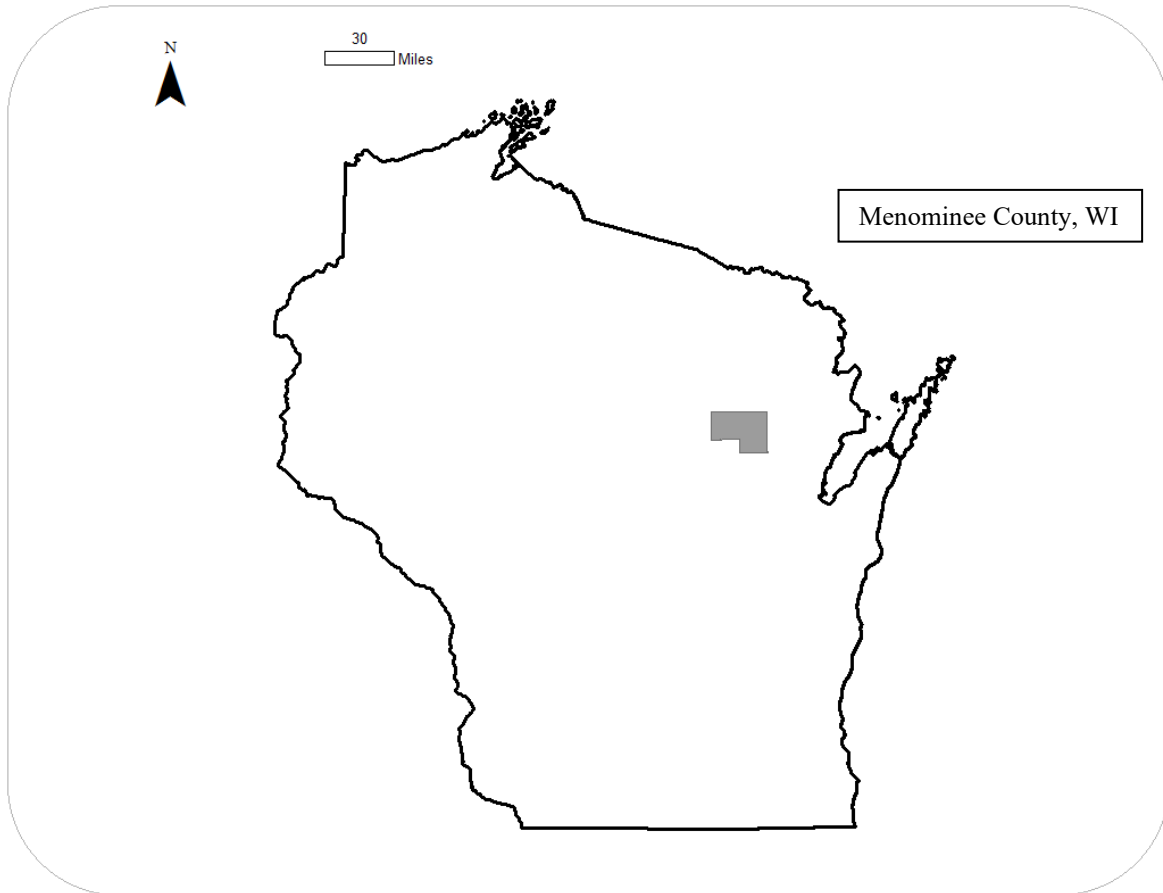


# **2025 Timber Management Environmental Assessment (EA)**

Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin forest lands

April 2025



Responsible Official:

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## A. Purpose and Need

The purpose of this proposed timber harvest is to produce maximum quality and quantity of forest products grown under sustained-yield management principles, while maintaining the diversity of native species as stated under the Menominee Forest Management Plan. The need for this proposed action is to promote general forest health, produce revenue for Menominee Tribal Enterprises (MTE) and provide local employment.

## Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action: Menominee Tribal Enterprises is proposing to conduct harvest on approximately 4,482 acres across the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin's forest lands, located in northeast Wisconsin (Figure 1). Table 1 has a summary of the proposed harvests, and their location within the Menominee Compartment system.

Table 1: 2025 Planned Treatments				
Prescription number	Harvest Season	Compartment(s)	Treatment Type	Acres
112-25-07-01	Spring / Summer	112	Seed-tree	16
202-25-01-01	Fall / Winter	202	Single Tree Selection and/or Group Selection	2,266
202-25-20-01	Spring / Summer	202	Intermediate Thin	121
313-25-05-01	Fall / Winter	313	White Pine Shelterwood System	47
325-25-01-02	Fall / Winter	325	Single Tree Selection and/or Group Selection	1,746
999-25-02-01	Spring / Summer	117, 122	Even-age BA Thinning (Plantation)	19
999-25-06-01	Fall / Winter	112, 115, 216	Intermediate Thin	108
999-25-09-01	Spring / Summer	112, 208	Clear-cut Natural Regeneration	117
999-25-21-01	Spring / Summer	113, 122	Row Thinning (Plantation)	42
Total Acres				4,482

There are seven different treatment types proposed across the 4,481 acres. Table 2 indicates the number of acres by treatment type.

Table 2: Acres by Treatment Type and Silvicultural System		
Treatment Type	Silvicultural system	Acres
Single Tree Selection and/or Group Selection	Uneven Aged	4,012
Intermediate Thin	Even Aged	229
Clear-cut Natural Regeneration	Even Aged	117
White Pine Shelterwood System	Even Aged	47
Row Thinning (Plantation)	Even Aged	42
Even-age BA Thinning (Plantation)	Even Aged	19
Seed-tree	Even Aged	16
Total Acres		4,482

A summary each of the treatments:

- Uneven-age Single Tree or Group Selection: Harvesting sawtimber, maintain growth and vigor of released trees, regenerating trees via canopy gaps.
- Intermediate Thin: Harvesting enough undesirable trees from a stand to meet a retention basal area, while leaving the residual trees relatively evenly spaced or releasing specific crop trees.
- Clear-cut Natural Regeneration: Harvesting all trees in an area, with an expectation that it regenerates to the same general stand composition.
- White Pine Shelterwood System: Harvesting the understory trees and leaving dominant, healthy, seed-bearing white and red pine trees to 10-30 BA.
- Row Thinning: Harvest every third row with some thinning within the leave rows, if necessary.
- Even-age Basal Area Thinning (Plantation): Harvesting enough undesirable trees from a stand to meet a retention basal area, while leaving the residual trees relatively evenly spaced or releasing specific crop trees.
- Seed-tree: Harvest all trees, except for 12-25 seed-bearing trees per acre to provide seed for natural regeneration.

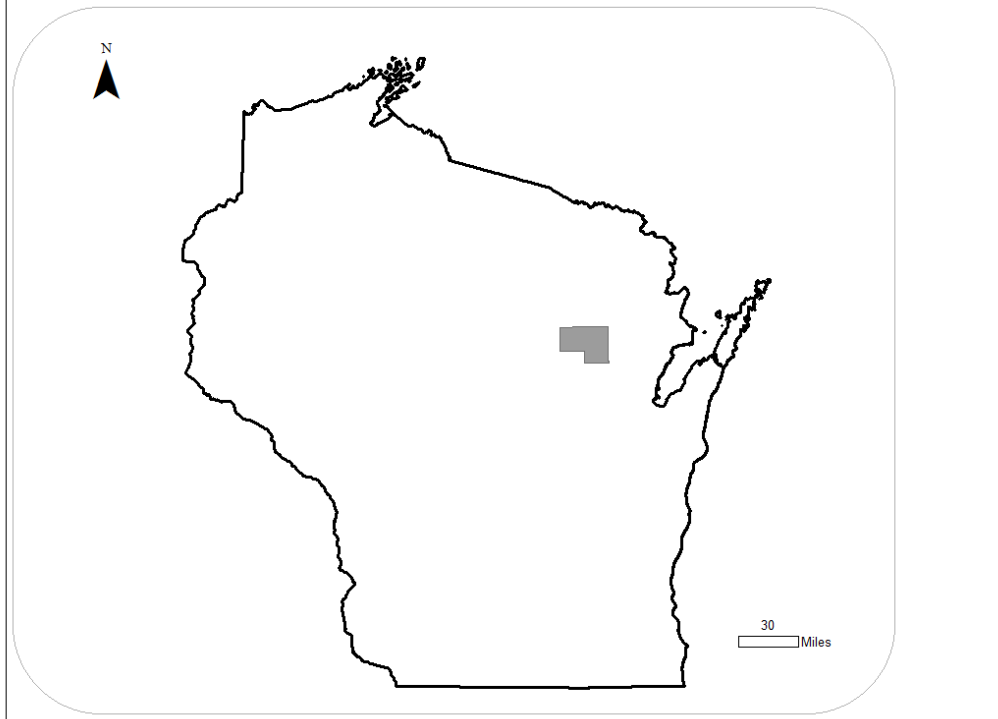
Specific portions of treatments:

- Appendix A includes stand by stand specifics for each treatment, including the location of those stands.
- In all treatments fresh cut pine stumps are treated with Sporax or Cell-u-Treat during the non-winter months. Those trees must be removed from the site within 2 weeks of cutting.
- Prescribed fire will be part of some prescriptions to reduce competition, prepare a seedbed for regeneration, or maintain an open condition within the stand.
- Spring and Summer treatments generally start May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Fall and Winter treatments generally start September 1<sup>st</sup> or August 1<sup>st</sup> depending on equipment.

No Action Alternative: No timber harvest or other management actions are proposed under the No Action alternative for this project. The proposed treatments will not take place, however other forms of forest management will continue, under other NEPA documentation.

Figure 1 displays the location of the Menominee Reservation within the boundaries of the State of Wisconsin.

Figure 1: State of Wisconsin with Menominee County, WI highlighted - location of Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin forest lands.



## B. Effects to the human environment

### i. Water Resources:

#### Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects: Potential effects will be mitigated by the measures indicated in Appendix A for each prescription. Implementing the measures described will result in a negligible effect to water resources. Appendix A states that:

- Harvesting equipment operation must not take place on grades greater than 15%, in order to control erosion. If this is unavoidable and the ground leaf layer is disturbed, proper structures must be constructed to minimize runoff and erosion.
- All BMP's and Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin E-code: Chapter 340-20 Limitations on tribal logging practices are to be followed.
- Stream crossings will only be allowed on existing roads with approved crossings.
- Use current State of Wisconsin BMPs for water quality as a guide. Follow Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin E-code: Chapter 340-20 Limitations on tribal logging practices. Do not operate wheeled or tracked harvesting equipment within 50 feet of wetlands or waterways except on roads or at stream crossings, or if the ground is dry or frozen.
- Avoid felling any timber into wetlands. If trees must be felled in such a manner, remove tops or slash from wetlands. Harvest equipment operating in areas of wetlands can occur where approved by the officer in charge if the area is dry or frozen. An example would be

seasonally appropriate crossings of wetlands in order to harvest trees on drier islands of timber inside of the wetland.

No Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects: No effects are anticipated as a result of the No Action alternative.

ii. Living Resources:

Forest Ecosystem

Action Alternative:

Direct Effects: At the stand and compartment level the effects of timber harvest will be temporary and short-term. Even-aged treatments covering 470 acres include 180 acres of regeneration harvests including clearcut, shelterwood, and seed-tree. These harvests have a few trees left on site while the new cohort grows. Another 290 acres are intermediate treatments and not regeneration harvests this entry. They will keep mature tree cover until the regeneration harvest in the future. All 4,012 acres of uneven-aged treatments will temporarily reduce the overstory coverage, but the stands will generally remain the same, with similar tree ages, structure, and classes, as well as shrub and forb vegetation layers.

Indirect and Cumulative Effects: The management of up to 4,482 acres of forested stands will have a negligible effect on the overall forest ecosystem due to the scale of the Menomonie forestlands and the relative lack of harvest intensity across much of that landscape. This type of forest management is typical across the Lake States, and this is not a disproportionate amount of area to treat on the Menominee Forest in a year.

No Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects: No effects are anticipated as a result of the No Action alternative.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Table 1: Threatened and Endangered Species in Menominee County, Wisconsin

Species	Status	Habitat
Gray wolf <i>Canis lupus</i>	Endangered	Northern forested areas
Northern long-eared bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Endangered	Hibernates in caves and mines - swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. During summer, roosts and forages in upland forests.
Karner blue butterfly <i>Lycaeides melissa samuelis</i>	Endangered	Prairie, oak savanna, and jack pine areas with wild lupine

List accessed 2025-04-21 using FWS IPaC tool (<https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/>)

Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects:

Gray wolf: There are no known denning sites in the project area and this limited proposed harvest is expected to have no known effects on gray wolves due to their broad range, and the negligible effect that this harvest would have on the forest ecosystem.

Northern long-eared bat: No direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to the northern long-eared bat population are anticipated as a result of the proposed harvest, as there are no known populations on Menominee Reservation forestlands. Additionally, there are no known hibernacula, no known roost trees on Menominee Reservation forestlands. This meets or exceeds the US Fish and Wildlife Service's mitigation measures for avoiding harvest activities within a 150 foot radius of known roost trees between June 1 and July 31 which is pup season; as well as avoiding year-round harvest activities within ¼ miles of known hibernacula.

Karner blue butterfly: No effects to Karner blue butterflies or their habitat are anticipated due to their habitat being prairie, oak savanna, or jack pine areas with wild lupine. This alternative does not propose harvest in those habitats.

No Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects: No effects to the listed species are anticipated as a result of the No Action alternative.

Cultural Resources:

Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects: No effects are anticipated. The Section 106 consultation process has been completed, and cultural resource sites will be avoided during the project. If any cultural resources sites are found during treatment preparation or harvest, they will be protected under Menominee Indian Tribe E-code: Chapter 340-20 Part C and the National Historic Preservation Act and Archaeological Resources Protection Act. Please see appendix A for Section 106 documents.

No Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects: No effects will occur.

iii. Socioeconomic Conditions:

The socioeconomic status in Menominee County, Wisconsin is below average relative to the rest of the State of Wisconsin. The monthly, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate as of February 2025 for Menominee County is 4.3%, which is more than the rate for the whole state

of Wisconsin's of 3.8%. (<https://research.stlouisfed.org/fred2/series/WIMENO8URN>, <https://research.stlouisfed.org/fred2/series/WIURN>).

Per capita personal income in Menominee County in 2023 was about 62% of the average in Wisconsin at \$42,070 compared to \$67,586 (<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PCPI55078>, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/WIPCPI>).

In 2023, 21.2 % of Menominee County residents were below poverty level (<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/S1701ACS055078>, No other county in Wisconsin was greater than 17.5% in 2023 (<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/release/tables?rid=416&eid=342620#snid=342660>).

#### Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects: The proposed harvest will provide revenue for Menominee Tribal Enterprises; and employment for members of the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin and other residents during the harvesting and processing of the forest products. The overall direct, indirect and cumulative effects as a result of the proposed harvest for socioeconomics are expected to be a minor positive benefit.

#### No Action Alternative:

Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects: No additional harvest and wood processing revenue and employment would occur because of this alternative. The proposed action would not occur and would be a minor negative effect to the Tribe and surrounding communities, as logging and forest products processing in a major employer in the area. No benefit to residents or the Tribe will occur. However, other NEPA actions could be implemented to contribute to these areas.

#### iv. Other resources:

##### Action Alternative:

Mitigation measures identified in Appendix A minimize the potential adverse effects to land resources. Negligible direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to water resources are expected with mitigation measures in place.

No effects will occur to other resources are anticipated under the action alternative.

##### No action Alternative:

No effects to other resources are anticipated as a result of this alternative.

### **C. Mitigation Measures to Reduce Potential Adverse Effects:**

See Appendix A for all mitigation measures required to implement this harvest.

#### **D. Consultation and Coordination**

##### Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act:

Consultation took place with Tribal Historic Preservation Office and BIA Midwest Region Staff. Consultation consistent with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act has been completed and cultural resource sites will be avoided during the project. If any cultural resources sites are found during treatment preparation or harvest, they will be protected under Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin E-code: Chapter 340-20 and the National Historic Preservation Act and Archaeological Resources Protection Act. Please see appendix A for Section 106 documents.

##### Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act:

Consistent with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, given the no effects determination was made for all known or suspected Threatened and Endangered species as a result of the project and proposed mitigation measures, no consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service was necessary. Any additional information found during preparation or harvest, including confirmation of maternity roost trees or hibernaculum for Northern Long-eared bats will be used to re-evaluate the determination before proceeding.

Updates to the Threatened and Endangered species list for Menominee County can be found using the USFWS iPaC tool at: <https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/>

#### **E. Contributors**

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Menominee Tribal Enterprises documentation of prescriptions.