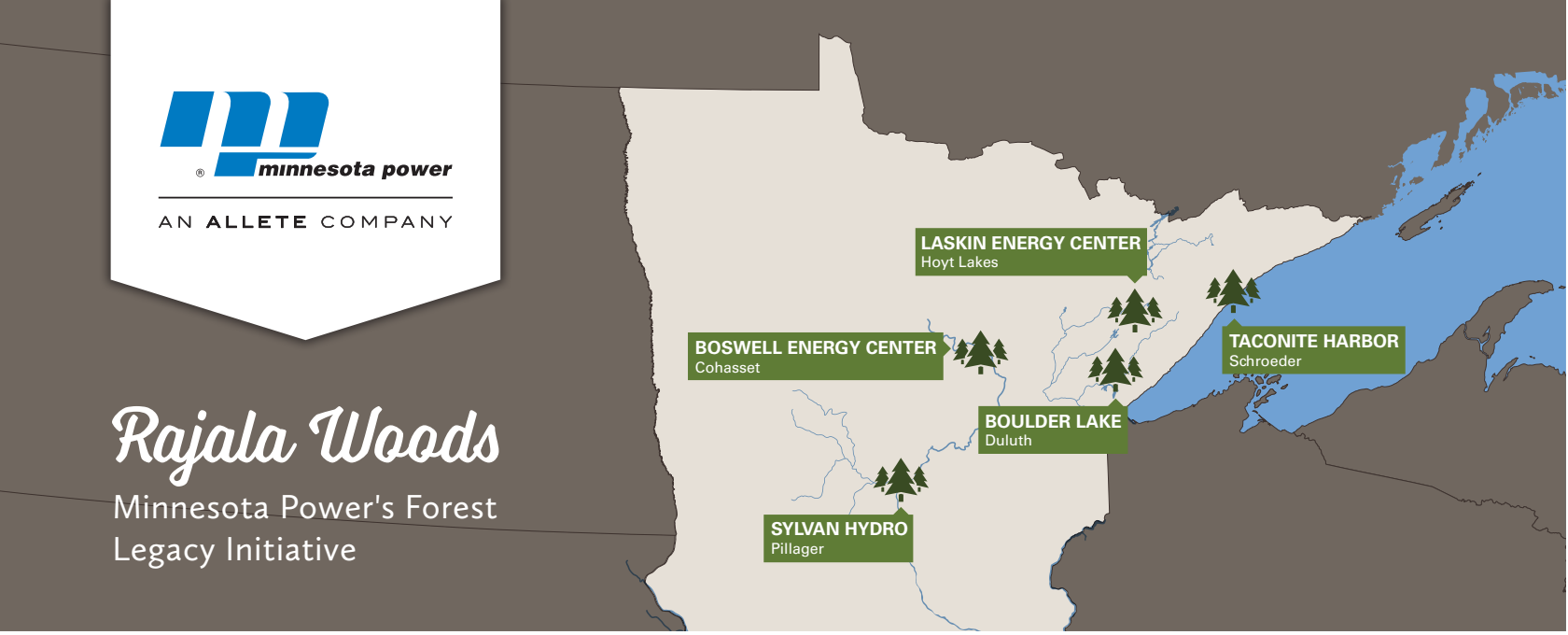
minnesota power

AN ALLETE COMPANY

# Rajala Woods

Minnesota Power's Forest Legacy Initiative




## What is the Rajala Woods?

It's Minnesota Power's forest management initiative to increase the percentage of longer-lived conifer tree species on forestland as highlighted on five parcels of Minnesota Power property in central and northeastern Minnesota. The Rajala Woods initiative will restore white pine and other conifer trees to more historical levels in the region through management practices that ensure sustainable use of the forest, improve biodiversity, bolster forest resiliency during climate change, conserve aquatic resources and enhance wildlife habitat and recreation.

Over time, Minnesota Power hopes to collaborate with other groups, organizations and individuals who share a vision of Minnesota's north woods as a healthy, biodiverse and sustainable resource for generations to come.

## Where are the first Rajala Woods settings?

Minnesota Power is highlighting the Rajala Woods forest management initiative on the North Shore near Taconite Harbor, adjacent to Colby Lake near Hoyt Lakes, at the Boulder Lake Management Area near Duluth, at the Blackwater Environmental Area in Cohasset, and near Pillager on land associated with Minnesota Power's Sylvan Hydroelectric Project.

The white pine, sometimes referred to as a five-needle pine because its needles grow in bundles of five, inspired the decision to highlight five forest settings for the initiative.

## How many trees will be planted?

The first phase of the Rajala Woods initiative calls for planting up to 3 million white pine, red pine, jack pine and spruce tree seedlings over the next 10 years in the Rajala Woods settings as well as on other company-owned forestland. The first 100,000 seedlings were planted at Boulder Lake and downstream of the Island Lake Reservoir Dam in May 2015. As collaborators and other landowners join the initiative, more trees will be planted in various locations.

## What will the investment be?

The total investment for the first phase is estimated at about $1.5 million over 10 years.

## How much land does Minnesota Power own?

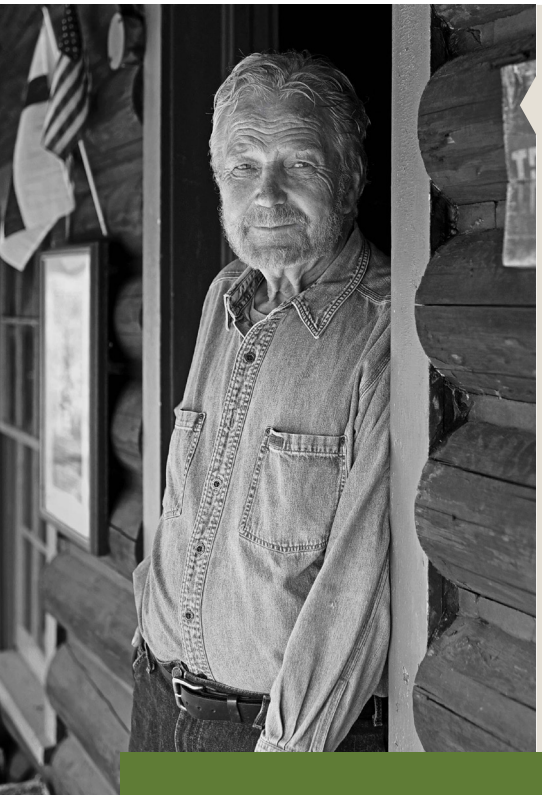
Minnesota Power owns about 30,000 acres in central and northeastern Minnesota, most of which is at water storage reservoirs designed to support renewable hydroelectric power generation. About 18,000 acres are considered productive forestland and about 500 acres are harvested each year.

Minnesota Power will plant about 300 acres a year in keeping with the Rajala Woods initiative to help shape forests with a higher percentage of longer-lived conifer species. The white pine, red pine, jack pine and spruce will be planted over a total of about 3,000 acres of company-owned land, including the Rajala Woods settings, during the first decade of the initiative.

## How can you get involved?

If you're interested in joining Minnesota Power in restoring the white pine and other longer-lived conifer species to more historical levels in the forests of northern Minnesota, contact John Paulson, manager of the Rajala Woods initiative, at 218-349-4530.

Sustaining a forest takes a community and involvement can take many forms from helping to purchase seedlings to volunteering to plant and maintain specific areas. It also takes the support of others who similarly manage forests to improve resiliency, biodiversity and productivity.



## Jack Rajala: advocate for forest sustainability

Jack Rajala (pronounced rye-a-la) was a conservationist, forest products businessman, and lifelong resident of Itasca County. He was chief executive of the Rajala Companies of Deer River, family businesses that produce lumber for furniture, homes, cabinetry, veneers and other wood products. Rajala developed a deep understanding and love for native northern Minnesota forests, especially white pine and birch, and wrote a book called "Bringing Back the White Pine" in 1998. He served on the board of directors of Minnesota Power's parent company, ALLETE, from 1985 to 2010. Rajala passed away in August 2016 at the age of 77.

*Photo courtesy of St. Olaf Magazine.*

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