

AGENDA

**County Of Eau Claire
Advisory Committee on Parks & Forest
Wednesday, November 16, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.
Agriculture & Resource Center (2nd Floor meeting room)
227 1st Street West, Altoona WI**

Members note: Please call the director (715) 839-4783 if you will not be able to attend the meeting.

1. Confirmation of meeting notice
2. Approval of meeting minutes from September 14, 2022 and October 12, 2022
3. Discussion on policy regarding off-road motorized vehicle use in the County Forest
4. Future and pending items: next meeting date

PLEASE NOTE: Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities through sign language, interpreters or other auxiliary aids. For additional information or to request the service, contact the County ADA Coordinator at 839-4710, (FAX) 839-1669 or 839-4735, tty: use Relay (711) or by writing to the ADA Coordinator, Human Resources, Eau Claire County Courthouse, 721 Oxford Avenue, Eau Claire, WI 54703.

**Eau Claire County
Parks and Forest Citizens Advisory Committee
Wednesday, September 14, 2022**

Agriculture and Resource Center 2nd Floor, with WebEx virtual option, 10:00 AM

Members Present: Michael Lea, Rick Rosen, Kevin Stelljes, Jolene Smith, Tom Feck, Gary Gibson, Pat Lavelle, Geoff Goodland, and Bobbi Barone (In person). Jay Plummer and Laura Hurd (Webex virtual).

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Josh Pedersen and Jody Gindt

Meeting was called to order and confirmation of meeting notice was affirmed.

Election of Officers

Nomination for Chair- Stelljes nominated Smith, Lavelle nominated Gibson, and Feck nominated Stelljes. Smith and Gibson accepted nominations; Stelljes declined. Paper vote ensued, Gibson totaled 6 votes and Smith 5. Gibson is new Chair.

Nomination for Vice Chair- Lea nominated Smith and Lavelle nominated Barone. Paper vote ensued, Smith totaled 7 votes and Barone 4. Smith is new Vice Chair.

Terms of members were also discussed. Membership will have a balance of 6 members terms lapsing at the end of odd numbered years. And 5 members terms lapsing at the end of even numbered years. Members whose terms are up at the end of 2022 include Lea, Smith, Goodland, Plummer, and Hurd.

Moving forward, the election of officers will be set after the county board elections. This will next occur in May of 2024. Current officers terms will begin now and run through May 2024.

Approval of Minutes from August 10, 2022

Move to approve by Lavelle. All in favor.

Discussion on policy regarding Off-Road Motorized Vehicle Use in County Forest

The Washburn County document that was shared between members was discussed and the consensus of the committee was that this was a good document to follow and copy as a template for creation of our policy.

The group requested copies to be mailed to all members for review and mark up prior to the next committee meeting. Staff will make sure everyone gets a copy. The goal for the next meeting date will be to walk through the document and pick out pieces that we would like to include in our policy and omit those that are not applicable.

Future and Pending items

Gibson stated that in the past the advisory committee had been more active in working on projects and issues and that he would like to see this committee brought back to previous levels of involvement. Pedersen mentioned that the Parks and Forest Committee would be holding an annual tour in October and all members of the advisory committee would be invited to that, date is currently slated for October 21st at 11:30 AM.

Next meeting date is scheduled for October 12 at 10:00 AM.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Josh Pedersen
Committee Clerk

**Eau Claire County
Parks and Forest Citizens Advisory Committee
Wednesday, October 12, 2022**

Agriculture and Resource Center 2nd Floor, with WebEx virtual option, 10:00 AM

Members Present: Tom Fleck, Gary Gibson, Patrick La Velle, Michael Lea, Richard Rosen, Jolene Smith, Kevin Stelljes.

Members Absent: Bobbi Barone, Geoff Goodland, Laura Hurd, Jay Plummer

Staff Present: Josh Pedersen and Winnie Parker

Call to order

Meeting was called to order by Gary Gibson and confirmation of meeting notice was affirmed.

Approval of Minutes from September 14, 2022

Minutes were not provided, approval expected at next Advisory Committee meeting Wednesday, November 9, 2022.

Public comments

No public comments were received.

Discussion of policy regarding off-road motorized vehicle use in Eau Claire County Forest

The Advisory Committee began reviewing the Town of Washburn County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan as a model for Eau Claire County. Edits will be made and presented as an updated draft at a future Advisory Committee meeting once complete.

Next meeting date is scheduled for November 9, 2022, at 10:00 am.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Winnie Parker
Committee Clerk

EAU CLAIRE COUNTY FOREST
 COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN
 CHAPTER 700 – ROADS AND ACCESS

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Approved by Eau Claire County ~~Board of Supervisors~~ [Advisory Committee on Parks and Forest](#) ~~October 19, 2021~~ [No Revisions](#) ~~October 26, 2022~~

700 ROADS AND ACCESS

Forestry, protection activities, recreation, and public uses on the Eau Claire County Forest require different types of access. Since the forest is large and diverse, a broad network of roads has developed over time. A combination of soil types, water resources, road densities, ownership of adjacent lands, ordinances and other regulations all contribute to the need to manage access to areas of the forest.

For the purpose of this Plan, a forest road is defined as, a road constructed by leveling or grading, originally intended to provide for motorized vehicle access by cars, trucks or other equipment. In addition, a forest road will also generally be mapped and inventoried within the County's road inventory system. Skid roads and other temporary impacts do not meet the definition of a forest road.

For the purpose of this Plan, a forest trail is defined as a recognized recreational system, designated by the County as an official trail. They include motorized and non-motorized trails and certain sections may be categorized as both a trail and a road depending on the circumstances of use.

For the purpose of this chapter, all timber ~~related~~related, or any other non-recreational trail access will be referred to as "roads". All recreation designated trails related will be referred to as "trails"

705 HISTORY OF ACCESS ROADS

The existing road network on the ~~Washburn~~Eau Claire County Forest developed over many years. The original system can be traced back to the late 1800's when sleigh roads were developed to haul logs to streams and rivers for transport to mills. The road network expanded with the introduction of railroads in the early 1900's. As highway infrastructures were built, along with the development of trucks capable of hauling wood, the network continued to expand and grow.

~~In 1952, there were an estimated 0.8 mile of road per square mile of forest. In 1990, the average was 3.5 miles of road per square mile on the same area of forest. This accounted for a 400-percent increase in road density in 39 years. In 2020, this road density was 4.2 linear miles per square mile. Roads are added on the forest, primarily for access to timber sales. In some cases they are added for fire suppression or protection and in some cases for recreational trail access.~~

The high road densities, coupled with increasing recreational demands for a variety of uses on the forest both justify a need for continued road and access planning.

TIMBER HARVEST ROADS

Many of the existing roads on the forest were built and developed over many years, by timber producers, for the purpose of transporting forest products. ~~Prior to about 1980, rarely~~ Rarely did staff from the County or the DNR establish proper locations or set standards for these roads.

Many of the early access roads for timber removal were used for frozen ground access and were constructed to accommodate hauling equipment that was much smaller than what is used today. ~~Many of these roads were built with little regard for wetlands, slope, erosion control or other environmental concerns.~~

As the forestry program evolved, more care and planning was implemented in the development of road networks. Bridges, culverts and primary haul roads were built and installed, providing feasible access to most areas of the forest.

Currently, a majority of the forest is accessible using the existing road system. Road construction needs are ~~minor, but~~ minor but may still be needed for access to certain areas. In most cases, roads either exist, or will need re-construction to provide access. In some cases, re- construction will include abandonment/reclamation of certain sections and new construction of segments to provide more practical and sustainable access. Unsuitable roads ~~should~~ will be abandoned and reclaimed.

RECREATIONAL ACCESS

Timber harvest was the primary reason for road construction. Gradually these timber access roads began to see increasing use by those seeking access for outdoor recreation. The earlier uses were periodic and scattered across the forest. ~~In general, prior to the 1980's,~~ Currently there ~~was is not~~ enough public use of forest roads to warrant restrictions or regulations.

Through the 1960's and 1970's, snowmobiles began to appear, along with a demand for recreational trails. A system of designated trails was slowly developed, leading to the network that exists today. Outdoor recreation began to increase in popularity, with County Forest lands rapidly becoming popular recreation destinations. Many of the roads and trails

began to see much more public motorized recreational uses.

The 1980's brought a tremendous increase in demand for motorized recreation. ATV's were introduced and began to appear on the forest. As use increased, damages and user conflicts began to occur. Through the 1990's the use of ATV's on the forest exploded, leading to a need to regulate motorized uses.

The public began to demand ATV access through the late 1990's and into the early 2000's. The County struggled to manage the increased demands and chose to start designating ATV trails. As machines grew in size and weight, as well as popularity, it became evident that ATV trails needed to be designed and engineered to a certain standard to accommodate the heavy uses that they attracted. The introduction of UTV's / side by sides increased the impacts to these trail systems.

Conflicts between those seeking non-motorized recreational access and those seeking motorized access continue to increase. The establishment of segregated trail systems has helped to satisfy demand and resolve user conflicts, but outside of official trail systems, this conflict continues to increase.

710 FOREST ROADS

~~Washburn-Eau Claire~~ County Forestry staff will oversee the construction and maintenance of all forest roads within the Forest. These forest roads will be constructed and maintained primarily by the County and timber producers operating under contract. Other public resource agencies or non-profit organizations may maintain roads under special agreement or circumstances permitted by the Forest Administrator or the Committee. Private parties may be granted road use and maintenance authorization under forest road use agreements that provide access to private parcels. The specifications for forest road construction and maintenance will vary with the frequency, duration, and planned use of each forest road.

New forest road establishment will consider information identifying areas with sensitive soils or severe slopes that should be avoided as part of new road planning efforts. County staff will work with DNR water resources staff, as needed, to develop site-specific measures where appropriate. New roads will be classified, at the time of construction, as one of the ~~five-four~~ major road types described later in this chapter.

A forest road inventory and classification program was initiated in 2003. All roads on the Forest will be mapped and classified based on road type, public access allowed, logging chance, work needs and problem areas. Data will also be collected for culverts, gates, berms, bridges and other features.

~~Five-Four~~ major types of road occur on the Forest, which include permanent primary roads, permanent secondary roads, tertiary roads, and temporary roads, ~~and obsolete roads. These road classifications do not necessarily permit public motorized travel.~~

PERMANENT PRIMARY ROADS

These roads are the primary roads accessing the County Forest. They are designed and constructed to allow for ~~year-round~~year-round use, but they are maintained as three season roads and will not be plowed for travel during winter months. Certain roads may be plowed if they are being utilized for timber sale operations. Some of these roads are graveled and all are usually graded at least once per year. Vehicle use may be restricted at various times of the year to minimize damage or to accommodate a groomed snowmobile trail. Although these are generally gas tax roads, they are not required to be posted signed with directional or caution type signage. The public may travel these roads at their own risk and discretion.

Most Permanent Primary Roads are either entered, or scheduled to be entered in the County Forest Road Aids Program. Qualifying roads must meet a minimum design standard of a 16-foot road surface and 20-foot roadway width. A yearly aid payment is used to help maintain and improve these certified public roads. The following list details the roads currently certified under **s.86.31**, Wis. Stats.

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Official List of County Forest Gas Tax Roads

Road Name	Section(s)	Town	Miles
Bear Trail Lane	34	Chicog	1.32
Big Bend Fire Lane	16, 17	Springbrook	2.75
Black Brook Flowage Rd	9	Frog Creek (E)	0.60
Bobcat Fire Lane	15, 16, 22	Springbrook	1.77
Casey Fire Lane	1, 2	Springbrook	0.82
Cedar Creek Fire Lane	29, 31, 32	Frog Creek (E)	1.40

Crooked River Fire Lane	4, 5	Minong (E)	3.39
Crow Fire Lane	10	Casey	0.96
Deer Lake Fire Lane	6,7,17,18,20,21	Casey	5.39
Deer Lake Spur	7	Casey	0.30
Dugan Run Fire Lane	30	Stone Lake	0.30
E. Flowage Road	28, 33, 34	Chicog	2.02
E. Flowage Road	4, 9	Casey	2.30
E. Oak Lake Fire Lane	17, 18, 20, 29	Chicog	2.56
Gardner Lake Fire Lane	5, 6, 7, 18, 19	Gull Lake	3.92
Gardner Lake Fire Lane	32	Frog Creek (E)	0.20
Gull Creek Spur	4, 9	Springbrook	1.63
Gull Creek Fire Lane	4, 9, 16	Springbrook	2.14
Hay Creek Fire Lane	1	Springbrook	0.85
Loop Fire Lane	16, 17, 21	Springbrook	0.42
Lupine Fire Lane	31	Chicog	0.48
MacRae Fire Lane	26, 27	Birchwood (N)	1.54
N. Harmon Fire Lane	12	Madge	0.28
Oak Lake Spur	29	Chicog	0.20
Oaks Fire Lane	19	Minong (E)	0.70
Oaks Spur	19	Minong (E)	0.51
Pine Fire Lane	10	Casey	0.72
Plum Fire Lane	18	Springbrook	0.80
Plum Spur Lane	18	Springbrook	0.50
Point Fire Lane	7	Minong (E)	1.12
Poppleshoot Fire Lane	5, 6	Frog Creek (W)	1.58
Poppleshoot Fire Lane	1, 12	Minong (E)	0.75
Powerline Fire Lane	18	Springbrook	0.45
River Fire Lane	17, 20	Springbrook	1.30
River Loop	27, 28	Chicog	1.13
Rosewood Fire Lane	3	Casey	1.90
Rosewood Spur	3	Casey	0.90
S. Harmon Fire Lane	19	Birchwood (N)	0.16
S. Harmon Fire Lane	24	Madge	0.42
S. Oak Lake Fire Lane	29, 30	Chicog	0.90

Salisbury Fire Lane	4, 5, 6, 7	Frog Creek (W)	4.30
Section 2 Fire Lane	2, 3	Springbrook	1.70
Section 4 Fire Lane	4	Casey	1.09
Section 4 Spur	4	Casey	0.08
Section 5 Fire Lane	5	Casey	0.70
Section 10 Fire Lane	3, 10	Casey	1.96
Section 10 Fire Lane	10, 11	Springbrook	0.70
Section 17 Fire Lane	8, 16, 17	Springbrook	1.62
Section 18 Fire Lane	18	Springbrook	1.50
Section 18 Spur	18	Springbrook	0.50
Section 19 Fire Lane	19	Springbrook	1.30
Section 19 Spur	19, 30	Springbrook	0.85
Section 20 Fire Lane	20, 29	Chicog	0.83
Section 29 Fire Lane	29	Chicog	1.02
Section 30 Fire Lane	30	Springbrook	1.40
Section 30 Spur	30	Springbrook	0.25
Section 33 Fire Lane	33, 34	Chicog	0.94
Section 33 Spur	34	Chicog	0.50
Shingle Camp Fire Lane	13, 14, 23, 24, 25	Barronett	4.40
Skunk Lake Fire Lane	2	Casey	1.50
Sleepy Eye Fire Lane	19	Minong (E)	0.36
Smith Fire Lane	19	Minong (E)	0.56
Spring Creek Spur	11	Springbrook	0.25
Spring Creek Fire Lane	3, 10	Springbrook	2.18
Stump Fire Lane	10	Casey	1.06
Swift Fire Lane	6	Minong (E)	1.08
Thunderbird Road	24	Barronett	1.05
Totogatic Park Road	12	Minong (W)	0.30
Town Line Fire Lane	34	Chicog	0.45
Tranus Lake Fire Lane	13, 24	Gull Lake	0.47
Tranus Lake Fire Lane	19, 20	Stinnett	1.15
W. Flowage Road	4, 5	Casey	1.00
W. Flowage Road	28, 33	Chicog	1.06
W. Oak Lake Fire Lane	19, 29, 30	Chicog	2.38

Warden Road	23, 24, 25	Crystal	1.35
Warden Road	19, 30	Stone Lake	1.40
Wayside Fire Lane	1	Springbrook	0.80
Whale Lake Fire Lane	7	Minong (E)	1.33
Whale Lake Spur	7	Minong (E)	0.35
Wilderness Road	21	Gull Lake	0.75

A map of Permanent Primary roads, including County Forest Roads and other primary roads is included in the appendix.

~~It is a recommendation of this Plan to evaluate the County Forest roads system for candidates eligible and feasible to enter into the County Forest Road program. Roads should be evaluated for current condition, importance, and upgrades necessary to meet County Forest Road standards. Roads may be entered upon approval of Committee.~~

PERMANENT SECONDARY ROADS

These roads serve a variety of uses, including forest management, fire protection, dredging, and recreation. These are maintained as part of a permanent road system but are often narrower than permanent primary roads and are built to lower standards. In general, these roads are secondary arteries leading from the primary roads. Some are maintained for public travel, others are restored after use and closed to public motorized traffic. In instances where motorized traffic is restricted, vehicle access will be allowed for authorized vehicles only. A map of permanent secondary roads is included in the appendix. **INVENTORY**

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TERTIARY ROADS

These roads primarily serve forest management activities and numerous undesignated recreational uses. ~~A majority of the roads on the forest fall into this category.~~ They may allow ~~year-round~~year-round or only seasonal use for forest management. In general, they are not maintained or improved unless management activities are occurring.

These roads may or may not be open to some level of ~~publiepublic~~public motor vehicle use. Many lie in heavier or wetter soils that allow only frozen ground use for forest management

activities. ~~Some of these roads are open to winter use of motor vehicles under 900 pounds (normally snowmobile trails).~~ Design and construction standards are minimal. They ~~are~~ part of a

~~permanent system of roads but they~~ are used on a much less frequent basis than primary or secondary roads. Many of these are used infrequently, ~~and it is a management objective to put many of these roads "to rest" after use.~~ These roads also provide many opportunities for hunter walking trails and other non-motorized uses. **PICK UP HERE ON NOVEMBER 9, 2022**

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TEMPORARY ROADS

Temporary roads are almost always used for timber management purposes. They are generally short segments of roads designated for short-term use. They are closed AND reclaimed in accordance with the timber sale prospectus and contract when the activity is complete. Roads can be ~~seeded~~~~seeded~~, and public motorized travel is prohibited. The need for temporary roads will be evaluated on a ~~ease-by-ease~~~~case-by-case~~ basis and are permitted only when approved and designated as part of a timber sale contract.

OBSOLETE ROADS

Scattered throughout the Washburn County Forest are numerous old roads, constructed for timber harvest, that are no longer suitable for future use. Many of these were constructed for frozen ground conditions. Roads categorized as obsolete may have been designed poorly, sited in unsuitable locations, have a high risk of erosion, or may impact water quality or other resources.

The intent of this classification is to create a list of roads to gradually remove and restore to forested settings. Once classified as obsolete, they should be removed from the forest reconnaissance system and road inventory. A separate listing should be maintained for monitoring purposes and to assure that these are not designated for future forestry or recreational use.

Criteria for consideration as an obsolete road will include any or all of the following:

- Steep slopes
- Soils with high potential for erosion
- Streams and wetland crossings
- Drainages with potential of siltation/sedimentation into water or wetlands
- Roads that do not serve any future management purpose
- Management area can be accessed using better road systems

- Environmental, cultural, social or other factors would benefit by abandonment.

This Plan recommends that staff identify and prioritize obsolete roads and to reclaim/restore as opportunities are available.

BRIDGES

Bridges were first built on the Washburn County Forest in the late 1960's in a cooperative effort between the National Guard and the County. In the mid 1980's additional bridges were built as a result of difficulties in obtaining permits for culvert crossings. Through the 1990's and later, the use of bridges increased significantly, especially in the recreation program, as a much more feasible and lower maintenance alternative to culverts.

Timber Access Bridges

The following bridges were built, primarily for access to timber sales, and have capacities for log trucks and fire control equipment:

Casey Creek – NENW Section 33 T41N-R13W

Gull Creek – NENW Section 16 T40N-R11W

Dugan Run – SENE Section 30 T39N-R10W

Spring Brook – NESW Section 14 T40N-R11W

Recreational Trail Bridges

The number of recreational trail bridges on the forest have increased significantly, either as either new or replacement bridges, over the last 15 years. Bridges have been built to a wide variety of standards. Motorized recreational trail bridges have been constructed to a range of weight ratings ranging from 12,000 to 25,000 pounds. Recreational trail bridges currently maintained on the Forest are:

County Land

Whalen Creek – NESW Section 25 T40N-R12W (snowmobile / ATV)

Hay Creek – SWNE Section 1 T40N-R11W (snowmobile / ATV)

Little Frog Creek – NWNE Section 3 T41N-R11W (snowmobile / ATV)

Chicog Creek – NWSE Section 9 T41N-R12W (snowmobile)

Spring Creek – SENW Section 3 T40N-R11W (snowmobile / ATV)

Dugan Run – NWSE Section 25 T39N-R11W (Horse)

Canadian National Bridge – SWSW Section 31 T42N-R10W (snowmobile / ATV)

Stony Brook Puncheons (4) – SWNE, SENE Sec. 2, SENW Sec. 1 T41N-R11W;
SESW Sec. 32 T42N-R11W (snowmobile/ATV)
Trail 39 Puncheon Bridge – NWSE Sec. 11 T41N-R11W (snowmobile/ATV)
Spider Loop Bridge – NENW Section 2 T37N-R10W (ATV)
Trail 39 Wetland Bridge – SESE Section 25 T41N-R11W (snowmobile/ATV)

Private Land / Other Recreation Bridges

Wild River Trail – SENE Sec. 1 T42N-R12W – Unnamed Stream
Wild River Trail – NESE Sec. 1 T42N-R12W – Unnamed Stream
Wild River Trail – NENW Sec. 12 T42N-R12W – Unnamed Stream
Wild River Trail – SESW Sec. 12 T42N-R12W – Totogatic River
Wild River Trail – NESE Sec. 23 T42N-R12W – Shell Creek
Wild River Trail – SENE Sec. 14 T40N-R12W – Whalen Creek
Wild River Trail – NESW Sec. 35 T40N-R12W – Namekagon River
Wild River Trail – NESE Sec. 3 T39N-R12W – Yellow River
Wild River Trail – SENE Sec. 6 T38N-R12W – Unnamed Stream
Wild River Trail – NENW Sec. 16 T38N-R12W – Unnamed Stream
Wild River Trail – NWSW Sec. 13 T37N-R12W – Pine Grove Road
Trail 4 – NWSW Sec. 15 T38N-R12W – Beaver Brook (snowmobile/ATV)
Trail 239 – NENE Sec. 26 T38N-R13W – Sawyer Creek (snowmobile)
Trail 140 – SWSE Sec. 16 T39N-R13W – Unnamed Stream (snowmobile)
Trail 140 – NWSE Sec. 23 T39N-R13W – Unnamed Stream (snowmobile)

FORDS

The Forestry Department has found that culverts typically require a high degree of maintenance. The Department began to test rock ford crossings during the late 1990's. A ford crossing is constructed by replacing stream bottoms with softball sized rocks, while maintaining the original elevation of the stream bed. This allows traffic to cross the water without causing erosion or sedimentation. A Chapter 30 permit is required for any ford crossings in a navigable stream. The following ford crossings are in use on the County Forest:

Elm Creek – NWSE Section 3 T41N-R10W
Spring Creek – SWNE Section 21 T41N-R11W

Sven Lake – SWSE Section 16 T38N-R10W

Hay Creek – SWNW Section 14 T41N-R11W

DRIVEWAY PERMITS

State Highways

Wisconsin DOT and Washburn County review and plan all access driveways connecting County Forest lands to state highways. It is critical that the County maintain permanent records of these driveway permits as they often tend to be considered obsolete by DOT without notification to the County. Whenever state highways are ~~reconstructed~~reconstructed, the County will make efforts to assure that all existing permits are included into project designs and that each driveway remains a viable access point, not only for recreation but timber management as well.

Many of the original permits cannot be found in Forestry Department archives. The locations of these driveways were recorded on the forest reconnaissance acetate overlays as they were approved. These maps are considered the official record of DOT driveway permits onto State Highways. Scans of these maps are included in Chapter 1000 and the permits are described in the individual units in Chapter 3000.

County Highways

Washburn County began requiring permits for all driveways onto county highways from County Forest lands in 1989. All new timber sale access points require a written permit from the County Highway Commissioner.

Town Roads

The Towns in Washburn County ~~may, or may or~~ may not require driveway permits for access to private lands. There is a legal question as to whether a town can require a permit for driveways/access from town roads onto County Forest Land. Regardless, it is the policy of Washburn County to contact towns whenever new driveways are needed onto the County Forest.

Even if Towns do not require permits, the County will make efforts to install driveways in a manner that limit environmental damage and considers public safety.

ACCESS ACROSS PRIVATE LANDS

It is often necessary to cross private or other lands in order to conduct forest management activities. Wherever an access point across other lands will repeatedly be needed, the Forest Administrator shall make a reasonable effort to secure an easement deeded to Washburn County for forest management purposes. These easements shall be requested for official use only with language outlining the County's responsibility to repair any damages that occur as a result of timber management activities conducted by the County. These easements may be purchased at the discretion of the Committee and County Board.

In cases where adjoining landowners are willing to allow access but are unwilling to grant an easement, an agreement should be executed.

715 RECREATIONAL ACCESS

The forest road network provides for many recreational opportunities on the Forest. Providing recreational access that does not damage resources and is compatible with other uses is an important role of the Washburn County Forest. The Committee has the authority to open and close forest roads and trails to use and to promulgate rules regulating those uses.

This section is intended to define undesignated recreational uses of forest roads. Undesignated is intended to refer to those uses where there is no formally provided or recognized trail system or facility. Designated recreational uses, meaning official trails and facilities are included in Chapter 900 of this Plan.

NON-MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USES

Hiking

All areas of the Washburn County Forest are open to hiking or foot travel unless an individual site is marked with signs closing an area. Closure to foot travel will normally not occur except in special circumstances such as erosion control projects or in situations where management activities endanger public safety.

Bicycling

All roads and fire lanes are open for recreational bicycle use. Off-road bicycle use is not permitted. Bicycle use may be further restricted by rule adopted by the Committee under Sec 50-38(26), Washburn County Code, if erosion or other environmental damage occurs. As of 2020, the only restriction on bicycles is prohibiting operation on groomed

snowmobile surfaces (fat tire bikes). This Plan recommends that the Committee consider restricting bicycle use on designated horseback trails.

For the purpose of this Plan, any bicycle equipped with any kind of motor, electric or other, is considered a motorized vehicle and subject to ordinance language as such.

Horseback Riding

All roads and fire lanes are open for horseback riding use. Off-road horseback riding (cross country travel) is not permitted. Horse use may be further restricted by rule adopted by the Committee under Sec 50-38(26), Washburn County Code, if erosion or other environmental damage occurs. This Plan recommends that the Committee consider restricting horseback use on designated bicycle trails.

The area east of Hay Lake in the Towns of Gull Lake and Stinnett has in the past seen high levels of unregulated horseback use. A trail system had originated from a riding stable on the west end of Hay Lake. At the time of this plan drafting, it is unknown whether riding opportunities are offered at that facility. This area should be monitored for use and corresponding damage. This Plan recommends that the Committee restrict organized trail riding unless on a County designated trail system, or under Committee authorization for special event, as defined in section 920.

Cross-Country Skiing

The entire forest is open to cross country skiing, although the use of groomed snowmobile trails is not recommended due to safety concerns.

Dog Sleds

Dog sleds are permitted on the Forest, with the exception that dogsleds may not be operated on designated winter trails at any time that the trails are groomed, maintained or officially declared open.

Other Non-Motorized Uses

In general, non-motorized uses are permitted on the County Forest without regulation. If the use is not identified in the Washburn County Code of Ordinances, or in a rule adopted by the Committee, it is considered unregulated.

The Committee may further regulate non-motorized uses as need arises, either through adoption of rule or creation of County ordinance.

MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USES

The demand for use of motorized vehicles on the Forest continues to increase. ATV's and UTV's continue to increase in size, weight and horsepower, and are capable for operation across almost any kind of terrain on the Forest. This has led to more widespread use, user conflicts, environmental damage and increase costs of maintenance for the County. Restrictions on motor vehicles need to remain in place to protect the forest and limit impacts.

It is the goal of this Plan to provide motorized access to the forest on certain roads capable of sustaining continued motorized use without incurring undue damage and in a manner that provides for a balance between motorized and non-motorized uses. See Section 750 for more information on road and access planning.

Snowmobiling

Undesignated trails are those not approved as a part of the official County snowmobile trail system and are not funded under the DNR Snowmobile Aids program. Travel off a designated snowmobile trail is permitted only on those roads established as open within the Road and Access Plan. Cross-country travel is not allowed. Travel is permitted on roads with the following designation:

1. Open to all motor vehicles
2. Open to motor vehicles except cars and trucks December 1 to April 1
3. Open to motor vehicles under 2000 lbs.
4. Open to motor vehicles under 900 lbs. December 1 to April 1
5. County Forest Roads

More detail on areas and roads open to undesignated snowmobile travel is contained within the Road and Access Plan. See Section 750.

All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV / UTV)

The Washburn County Code of Ordinances regulates the use of ATV's / UTV's on roads not designated as ATV trails. The following summarizes regulations applying to ATV/UTV use:

1. Cross-country travel is not permitted anywhere on the County Forest.
2. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on roads blocked with earthen berms, piled logging debris, signs, gates, or other closures installed by, or directed to be installed by the County Forest Administrator.
3. Motor vehicle travel is allowed only on those roads designated as open by the Committee.
4. ATV / UTV use is not allowed from April 1 through the first Friday before Memorial Weekend, or at any time when DNR fire danger is posted at very high classification or higher. The Forest Administrator may establish alternative dates based on fire danger and road conditions.

ATV Defined

Washburn County, for the purpose of use on County Forest Lands, utilizes the definition of an ATV as described in s.340.01(2g), Wis. Stats., as of 2019, as follows:

1. Engine driven device having a net weight, without fluids, of 900 pounds or less
2. Width of 50 inches or less
3. Seat designed to be straddled by the operator
4. Travels on 3 or more low pressure or non-pneumatic tires.

The Committee may elect to continue to use the definition above if State Statutes are amended to accommodate a larger and/or heavier machine.

UTV Defined

Washburn County, for the purpose of use on County Forest Lands, utilizes the definition of a UTV as described in s.23.33(~~4~~)(1)(ng), Wis. Stats., as of 2019, as follows:

1. A commercially designed motor vehicle device that is not a golf cart, low-speed vehicle, dune buggy, mini truck, or tracked vehicle designed to be used primarily off of a highway, that has, and was originally manufactured with, all of the following:
 - a. A weight, without fluids of 2,000 pounds or less

- b. Four or more low-pressure tires or non-pneumatic tires
- d. A steering wheel
- e. A tail light
- f. A brake light
- g. Two headlights
- h. A width of not more than 65 inches
- j. A system of seat belts, or a similar system, for restraining each occupant of the device in the event of accident
- k. A system of structural members designed to reduce the likelihood that an occupant would be crushed as a result of a rollover of the device.

The Committee may elect to continue to use the definition above if State Statutes are amended to accommodate a larger and/or heavier machine. The definition in this Plan must be amended if Washburn County determines that it is appropriate to allow machines exceeding this definition to operate on the County Forest.

ATV and UTV Use on the Forest

ATV and UTV use on officially designated ATV trails is further defined in Chapter 900. In general ATV's and UTV's are permitted on officially established, designated summer ATV trails. UTV's are generally not permitted on designated snowmobile trails with the exception of the Wild River Trail and Shell Lake Grade.

Operation of ATV's and UTV's on roads not designated as an ATV trail is regulated by Washburn County Code and by the Washburn County Road and Access Plan. In general, the following regulations apply to undesignated ATV/UTV use:

- Certain roads are designated as open to all motor vehicle use. On these roads, ATV and UTV use is permitted.
- Certain roads are designated as open to motor vehicles under 2000 pounds. On these roads, only ATV's and certain UTV's weighing less than 2000 pounds are permitted
- Certain roads are designated as open to motor vehicles under 2000 pounds AND are designated as official summer use ATV trails. UTV and ATV use is permitted on these roads/trails.

- Certain roads are designated as open to motor vehicle use under 900 pounds December 1 through April 1. These are normally designated snowmobile trails and only ATV use is permitted during the allowed time period. UTV's are not permitted.

Modified ATV/UTV Use

ATV's and UTV's that have been modified in any manner that would prohibit the machine from being registered with the State of Wisconsin as an ATV or UTV are not permitted on any roads or trails on the Washburn County Forest. This includes machines that were modified after registration has been made and stickers affixed to the machine. Modified machines are permitted only on private lands and users are required to carry a legitimate registration on machines operating on the County Forest, whether they are on a designated motorized recreation trail or on a forest road open to motor vehicle use.

Other Motor Vehicle Use on Roads

Other motor vehicle use by the public, such as cars and trucks, is allowed on certain forest roads as long as they are generally less than 10,000 pounds and are a vehicle registered for highway use. Unlicensed vehicles such as golf carts, mini-pickups, or other vehicles that cannot be registered as a highway vehicle, snowmobile, ATV or UTV are not permitted to operate on the Forest. Vehicle use is permitted only on those roads designated open by the Committee and recognized as such in the Road and Access Plan.

Two wheeled motorized travel (mini-bikes, dirt bikes, motorcycles, etc.) are not permitted anywhere on the forest with the exception of State licensed, street legal motorcycles on County Forest Gas Tax roads.

Motorized Access for Disabled Persons

Washburn County allows for motorized access to the forest for persons with disabilities. These permits allow a ~~disabled~~ party to use a motor vehicle under a permit issued by the County. This permit system is described in section 765.3.

720 PRIMITIVE AREAS

In addition to providing motorized units and roads, Washburn County also provides designated areas where motorized vehicles are not permitted, unless authorized by the Forest Administrator or Committee. The intent is to provide areas for quiet, secluded recreation, along with preventing

environmental damage and protecting unique values. These areas may be all of an Integrated Resource Management Units (IRMU) or sub-units of an IRMU. These are detailed in the Road and Access Plan and also in Chapter 800. The following units and sub-units are designated as primitive / restrictive use areas:

Totogatic Park Unit: Unit A of IRMU 1	215 Acres
DeRosier Unit: Unit A of IRMU 2	695 Acres
Cedar Creek Unit: Unit A of IRMU 3	3,165 Acres
Silent Wood Unit: IRMU 4	700 Acres
Youth Camp Unit: Unit A of IRMU 8	460 Acres
Village Unit: Unit A of IRMU 9	345 Acres
Nordic Unit: Unit A of IRMU 12	5,465 Acres
Birchwood Canoe Unit: Unit A of IRMU 13	3,010 Acres
Welsh Lake Unit: IRMU 15	7,040 Acres

725 WATER ACCESS

Washburn County has abundant water resources and motorized access to lakes, rivers and streams may be planned, developed or restricted as a component of the Road and Access Plan. Numerous boat landings and launches, along with roadside access provide access for ~~water-based~~water-based recreation. This section addresses these access sites that are either on or adjacent to the County Forest.

Most boat landings on lakes within or abutting County Forest are associated with Town roads. In many cases, little is known about the origin of or jurisdiction on these landings. Historically, the Forestry Department and the Towns have both provided maintenance activities as resources were available and work was needed. Clarification of the actual ownership does not seem to be necessary at the time of this Plan drafting. Should ownership of these landings need to be determined, it will be the stance of Washburn County that the County controls them unless other circumstances dictate otherwise. Additionally, the Washburn County Code of Ordinances governs all landings located within County Forest Property.

Red Lake, Loon Lake and Spider Lake are special circumstances. These landings were built as a collaborative effort between DNR and the Town of Birchwood. The County has historically considered the town and DNR as responsible for maintenance.

Proposals for additional motorized boat landings or boat launches on the numerous small lakes within the County Forest should be analyzed carefully and with a goal of minimizing over use / overfishing.

PUBLIC BOAT ACCESS SITES MAINTAINED BY THE COUNTY FOREST

1. Loyhead Lake
2. Wolf Lake
3. Sawmill Lake
4. Big McKenzie Lake
5. Elbow Lake
6. Harmon Lake
7. Chippanazie Creek (Davis Flowage)

ACCESS SITES, ON OR NEAR COUNTY FOREST, MAINTAINED BY TOWNS

1. Spider Lake
2. Red Lake
3. Loon Lake
4. Leisure Lake
5. Casey Lake
6. Beaver Lake
7. Tranus Lake
8. Chippanazie Lake
9. Minong Flowage – Totogatic Park

PUBLIC ACCESS SITES, ON OR NEAR COUNTY FOREST, MAINTAINED BY DNR

1. Spider Lake
2. Red Lake
3. Loon Lake

PUBLIC ACCESS SITES, ON OR NEAR COUNTY FOREST, MAINTAINED BY
HIGHWAY

1. Slim Creek Flowage
2. Birch Lake – Birchwood Dam site

PUBLIC ACCESS SITES MAINTAINED BY NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

All boat launch sites associated with the Namekagon River are under the jurisdiction of the National Parks Service.

UNDEVELOPED WATER ACCESS POINTS

Other undeveloped water access points for canoes and boats currently exist on the Forest. These are routinely used to launch boats or canoes but have not been officially developed to accommodate boat trailer launching. These sites are not routinely maintained and may be closed if erosion damage becomes severe. All new sites for developed water access must be reviewed and approved by the Committee and should be identified as a recommendation within this Plan and the Washburn County Forest Outdoor Recreation Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WATER ACCESS RECOGNIZED WITHIN THIS PLAN

1. Consider clarifying maintenance responsibilities on all boat landings on the County Forest.
2. Increase maintenance levels of all existing boat landings. Work to cooperate with other agencies in maintaining landings and also to secure funding sources.
3. Upgrade the primitive launch and parking area on Chippanazie Creek to provide access to Davis Flowage.
4. Repair and upgrade access to Ole Lake
5. Maintain existing access points to West, Superior, Scoot, Wolf, Loyhead and Pine Island Lakes.
6. Continue to maintain the lakes associated with the Birchwood Canoe Unit as non-motorized access.
7. Monitor non-designated boat launch sites for potential damage.

730 MOTORIZED USES ON SURFACE WATERS

Counties may request that Towns, under the authority of s.30.77(3), Wis. Stats. establish regulations restricting motorized use on surface waters. If a Town restricts motorized use, canoes, kayaks, and boats propelled by wind, oars, or electric motors would be permitted. On the Washburn County Forest, only Sawmill Lake is classified with motorized restrictions.

This Plan recognizes the importance of retaining Sawmill as non-motorized. Additional lakes may be considered for non-motorized designation at the discretion of the Committee and agreement of the Town of jurisdiction.

735 WETLANDS

All wetlands on the County Forest are closed to recreational motorized vehicle use. The only exception is on designated snowmobile trails during winter months. The Washburn County Code of Ordinances regulates operation of motor vehicles in a wetland and subsequent penalties for violations.

740 ACCESS TO PRIVATE LANDS

The Department of Natural Resources has determined that granting a private easement across County Forest lands is not consistent with the County Forest Law program. The determination is based on Attorney General Opinion (OAG-08-10). Easement grants to individuals are generally determined to be an exclusive right on a publicly owned asset. Counties are generally restricted from granting easements on County Forest land unless the easement or if the easement helps to achieve the purposes of the County Forest Law program.

TEMPORARY ACCESS

Requests for temporary access across County Forest lands will be reviewed on a case by case basis. In general, temporary access would be for timber harvesting on private lands, utility maintenance and others. If there are no potential conflicts with management activities or possible resource damage, the Forest Administrator may grant permission for temporary access. Access permission should be issued under form of a permit, agreement, or letter of authorization. Any authorization for access should contain requirements of restoration and may include performance deposits or other sureties. In cases of access for timber sales, the Forest Administrator may request that the performance deposit and contract on the private timber sale be expanded to include coverage to the County Forest property being used.

ACCESS AGREEMENTS

Given that easements across County Forest lands are restricted, access to private parcels may be granted under access agreements. Applications for an access agreement may be made by private parties to build, improve or use access roads across the County Forest. All requests will be made to the Forest Administrator and referred to Committee for review.

Access agreements will be considered on a ~~ease-by-ease~~case-by-case basis and it is the position of the Committee that Washburn County is not legally obligated to provide access to private lands. Access across County Forest lands must be demonstrated by the applicant as the route of last resort, including evidence of an offer of fair compensation for access across other private lands. In addition, these agreements are not attached to title and do not transfer with ownership. Upon land sale of the private parcel, the new owners must apply to the Committee for an access agreement.

The following stipulations will be included in access agreements:

1. Access roadway may not exceed 20 feet in width
2. The agreement may be cancelled by 30 days written notice should the use interfere with present or future management objectives of the County.
3. The agreement is non-transferable.
4. No merchantable wood products will be cut without written approval of the County.
5. The permittee shall, as directed by the County, dispose of all stumps, slash, waste materials and other debris resulting for construction activities.
6. The agreement area shall be maintained in a safe and environmentally sound condition at all times, causing no obstruction to public use.
7. Any reconstruction or improvements must be approved in advance by the County
8. No gates, signs, or other articles of the permittee will be allowed on County Forest land.
9. Permittee agrees to waive any rights to any declaration of ownership or interest in the road on County Forest land.
10. The agreement will be null and void if the use has changed from the originally intended use.
11. Agreement will be null and void if not used for two or more years.
12. Permittee agrees to follow all County Forest rules and ordinances while on County Forest lands.

Agreements will be issued for a term not to exceed 10 years. They may be extended by a request, in writing, at least 30 days in advance of expiration. Fees will be assessed as a minimum base fee and a charge per linear foot of road. The rates are to be established by the Committee and reviewed periodically. Fees may be waived in cases of permit renewal or

where the requested agreement lies on existing forest roads. The Committee may also elect to establish new fee schedules at the time of application for agreement renewals.

ACCESS TO MULTIPLE OWNERSHIPS OR DEVELOPMENTS/SUBDIVISIONS

There are cases in Washburn County where developments or subdivisions are served by single access points crossing County Forest lands. These situations usually occur in association with lakeshore developments where existing forest roads have been used for access over many years. In these cases, issuance of multiple access agreements becomes cumbersome and problematic.

In these cases, the County may consider granting an easement to the local Town for the purpose of a gas tax town road open to the public. The Town of jurisdiction would need to be receptive to acquiring the easement. It is assumed that grant of easement to a Town for access would be permissible under the County Forest Law. The Forest Administrator shall submit such proposals to the DNR County Forest & Public Lands Specialist for review prior to finalizing any proposals.

PRESCRIPTIVE EASEMENTS

Historical access points and driveways may meet the legal requirements of a prescriptive use easement. A prescriptive use easement does not generally trigger a need to withdraw lands from the County Forest program unless the public is excluded from motorized travel on the subject road. Any potential claims of prescriptive easement across County Forest lands must be reviewed by legal counsel in order to determine legal validity and possible legal defense or standing. Prescriptive use claims must also be reviewed by the DNR to determine need for County Forest withdrawal.

OTHER TYPES OF ACCESS

Complex issues of private access issues may arise in the future. Any proposal to grant an easement across County Forest must help achieve the purposes of the County Forest Law and meet a standard of better and higher public use. Easement to private parties will require withdrawal from County Forest Law and are to be discussed with the DNR prior to initiating any proposals.

PRIVATE UTILITY ACCESS

Access requests for utilities serving private residencies are subject to the same Attorney General Opinion based easement restrictions as defined in Section 740. All private utilities shall be handled by permit or agreement. Terms and conditions for private utilities are locate in Chapter 500 (Sec. 505.6).

745 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The layout and construction of any new road or trail on the Forest shall adhere to Wisconsin's Best Management Practices for Water Quality (PUB-FR-093-2010). Areas with highly erodible soil types, close proximity to streams or lakes, or steep slopes may require mitigating measures in excess of those described in the manual. Other areas may allow for alternate prescriptions than those listed in the BMP guidelines if it can be shown that equal or greater water quality protection is provided for.

750 RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ON ROADS AND TRAILS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Washburn County will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations in the development and maintenance of any publicly accessible County Forest building or developed facility or intensive use area. If instances are found where this is not the case, procedures for corrective measures will be implemented.

It is the opinion of the Committee that the ADA act is not intended to apply to undeveloped areas or the general forest. The Committee, however, will make every effort to provide recreational opportunities for people with disabilities. As part of this commitment, Washburn County provides the following:

1. Areas of the County Forest are open to motorized travel on most roads and trails
2. Disabled persons holding a State Class "A", Class "B" or other proof of disability may receive a permit from the County to operate a motor vehicle in areas or on roads designated closed. A copy of this permit form is appended in Chapter 1000.
3. The Committee has helped sponsor special disabled hunts in accordance with State regulations and will consider such requests as a valid use of the Forest.

755 FOREST ROAD AND ACCESS PLAN BACKGROUND

HISTORY

The road network on the Washburn County Forest evolved out of a necessity to reach timber sales and remove forest products. Most of these roads were built in conjunction with the long history of management on the Forest. As recreational uses grew, conflicts between motorized and non-motorized uses began to increase.

The resulting problems became evident in the 1980's. Damage to roads, erosion, dumping, ~~wild fires~~wildfires and user conflicts became widespread across the Forest, leading to the development of policies aimed at dealing with these issues. In 1984, a "County Forest Land Recreation Ordinance" was established.

This Ordinance allowed the Forestry Committee to designate roads and areas as closed to motorized vehicles. In the same year, the County began to install gates and signs on the snowmobile trails that were susceptible to damage from unregulated motor vehicle use. Many of these trails had suffered annual rutting damages. Snowmobile clubs recognized immediate improvements to the safety and quality of these trails. In addition to snowmobile trail seasonal closures, the Forestry Department was directed to close all newly constructed roads as well as other areas where damage was occurring.

The 1996-2005 Washburn County Comprehensive Land Use Plan incorporated these policies, along with significant public input into an official Road and Access Plan. The preparation of that Plan was driven by a goal of changing the lack of managed access that existed prior to 1980 to a more balanced motorized access to the Forest. Many cooperators worked with the Forestry staff and Committee to attempt to create this balance. The following is a list of those cooperators:

DNR Wildlife Management	Lakehead Pipeline
National Parks Service	Railroads
DNR Fire Control	Utility companies
DNR Fisheries	Town boards
County Zoning	DNR Water Regulations
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	DNR Forestry
Snowmobile Clubs	Timber producers
ATV Club's	adjoining landowners

Ruffed Grouse Society	Forestry Committee
Ski Clubs	County Board
Wis. DOT	Ice Age Trail
County Highway Department	Sportsmen groups

The original plan categorized the 30 resource management units on the Forest as closed to motor vehicles, moderately open to motor vehicles, or open to motor vehicles on established roads and trails. The implementation of this plan was a monumental effort by the County and was met with a mixture of support and opposition. Over time, the plan has generally received much more acceptance.

The original framework of this plan is considered as a valid concept yet today and has been accepted as the framework for the Road and Access Plan included in this County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan

NEED FOR A ROAD AND ACCESS PLAN

Roads provide access for activities on the Forest such as timber harvests, other management activities and recreation by the public. Over time, the frequency of vehicle use on the Forest has increased due to expanding numbers of motorized recreational vehicles. The public's desire to use many of these roads often conflicts with a road's capacity to support continued traffic interferes with management ~~objectives, and~~ objectives and creates user conflicts. The following issues indicated a continued need to manage access:

1. User conflicts between user groups, e.g. snowmobiling versus cross-country skiing; hunting on foot versus use of vehicles to access game.
2. Safety, mixing motorized uses with non-motorized
3. Erosion – soils eroding and impacting water quality due to over use/damage by motor vehicles.
4. Damage – rutted or impassable roads, requiring repair costs by the County or others.
5. Litter/dumping – depositing/dumping garbage in remote areas
6. Crowding – complaints about intensified competition for traditional hunting areas.
7. Fires – ~~increase~~ increased risk of accidental fire occurrence
8. Invasive Species – introduction of invasive species along travel routes.

9. Road Placement – many existing roads are in unsuitable locations or may not support unregulated motor vehicle use.
10. Large Machines – ATV's and especially UTV's are continually being manufactured as larger, heavier and with bigger horsepower.

It is important to note that prior to 1980, road densities were estimated to be 0.8 linear miles of road per square mile of County Forest. Current road densities are estimated to be over 4 miles per square mile of forest. Original Road and Access Plan goals were aimed at maintaining a density of roads and trails open to public motorized use at a level similar to pre-1980 road densities.

It is also important to note here that the presence of a forest road on the landscape does generally not impact the ecology of the forest or provide any level of environmental damage. It is the continued motorized use of a road or system that often leads to erosion and resource damage. Roads that are “put to rest” for a period of time usually develop stable, grassed surfaces in a short period of time.

760 ROAD AND ACCESS PLAN FOR PUBLIC MOTORIZED VEHICLE TRAVEL

The objective for the Road and Access Plan is to provide a balance between motorized and non-motorized uses on the Forest while protecting the resource from environmental damage. This Plan attempts to meet a multiple use goal of providing balanced access to a wide variety of groups while still protecting the natural resource.

It is the intent of this County Forest Plan to recognize that the Road and Access Plan framework, as established in the 1995 – 2005 County Forest Plan, is a viable format and is accepted by this Plan as the template for the 2021 – 2035 Plan. It is also the intent of this Plan to maintain the road densities established as open to motorized public travel in the prior Plan. A comprehensive review of Integrated Resource Units and roads and trails within those units has resulted in changes to specific roads open to motorized uses, but the intended density remains similar to Plans.

It is important to note that a designation allowing for public motorized use on specific roads does not provide any level of assurance to the public that roads are maintained to a standard that guarantees that travel is feasible. Continued motorized use damages many road surfaces and over

time they become impassable. What makes this situation worse is that many of these damaged roads attract 4 x 4 enthusiasts looking for “challenge” opportunities. Funding for road maintenance is limited and the public is advised that travel is at your own risk.

The Road and Access Plan applies regulations to all areas of the Forest, as well as regulations by unit. Each Integrated Resource Management Unit is designed with specific road closure policies.

VEHICLE USE REGULATIONS ON ALL COUNTY FOREST LANDS

The following regulations apply to motor vehicle access on all areas of the Forest. It is understood that vehicles used in the management of the Forest by staff, by special permission, or as allowed by contract are exempted from these regulations:

1. No off-road (cross country) vehicle use is allowed.
2. No motorized vehicles are allowed on roads designated as closed with earthen berms, piled logging debris, or gates, even if signs are missing and berms damaged.
3. Two wheeled motorize vehicles are not permitted on the Forest (except State licensed motorcycles on State funded County Forest Roads). (s.86.315(4)(a), Wis. Stats.)
4. ATV/UTV use is not permitted from April 1 through the first Friday before Memorial Weekend, or at any time that DNR fire danger is posted at very high classification or higher.

REGULATIONS SPECIFIC TO INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNITS

An index to Integrated Resource Management is found in Section 765 of this Chapter. Specific regulations are identified for each Integrated Resource Management Unit on the map legend. The Road and Access Plan provides a public motorized access designation for each County Forest Units and/or Sub-Units as follows:

Open

Least ~~amount~~number of restrictions on public motorized access. Most roads are open to public motor vehicle use, although there may be restrictions by vehicle class (ATV, UTV, Highway vehicle, etc.) and certain roads might be closed to motorized use where environmental damage may occur. No more than 20% of the road miles within a unit may be closed under the Open unit classification.

Road and Access Plan map backgrounds are colored either white or gray to designate open units.

Intermediate Moderate restrictions on public motorized access. Specific roads are designated open in the units, within a framework that provides for no more than a 1 mile walk to access a road or trail where motorized access is permitted. Access may be restricted to certain types of vehicles or certain weights. Individual unit maps will identify those open roads and the type of motorized traffic that is allowed.

The framework of 1 mile distances, which equates to a 2-mile road density, is conceptual. Not all areas of the forest are able to provide this level of access. There are large wetland complexes where this is not feasible. The County will make attempts to create this density where it is practical.

Road and Access Plan map backgrounds are colored blue to designate ~~managed-~~
~~units~~managed units.

Primitive Most restrictions on public motorized access. Motor vehicle use is generally not permitted. The prior Plan allowed a provision that roads or trails may be designated as open to motorized travel provide the density does not exceed 5% of the total road and trail miles within the unit. These roads were generally opened as part of a larger trail connection planning effort or under other extenuating circumstances. The open road/trail density existing within these units as of January 1, ~~2020~~2020, are considered the maximum use allowed. No additional motorize access will be permitted in these units.

Road and Access Plan map backgrounds are colored pink or red to designate primitive units.

Forest roads open to motorized travel may or may not be maintained by the County. An “open” designation does not guarantee that the subject road is passable. The user assumes all risk for use of these roads.

PROCEDURE FOR CHANGING ROAD AND ACCESS PLAN

The Committee or the County Board may make changes to the Road and Access Plan. The Committee may make minor changes to the Plan. ~~Minor~~Minors include the following:

- Road opening or closing that does not affect the overall percentage of roads open or closed within the unit.
- Changes to access that do not require a change in unit classification.
- Road closures in “Open” units that do not exceed 20% of the total miles of roads within the unit.
- Changes to “Managed” units that still comply with the 2-mile density of roads/trails open to motorized use.
- Changes to the types of motorized travel allowed on roads
- Roads or trails may be opened within “Closed” units provided the proposal is part of a larger planning effort and the open miles within the unit do not exceed 5% of the roads within the unit.
- Changes outside of these criteria may only be made by County Board and may require a public hearing. Changes of this nature are considered a change to this Plan and require a 2/3 majority vote of the County Board of Supervisors.

RECOMMENDED FUTURE CHANGES TO THE ROAD AND ACCESS PLAN During the duration of this Plan, there are several recommendations for changes regarding roads and trails within the Integrated Resource Management Units. The following are recommendation for consideration:

1. Continue to evaluate open units where road densities are high. Consider developing a plan for closure of stub, parallel, and redundant road systems.
2. Upgrade main access roads open to motorized travel in order to reduce damage and allow for more continual, stable access.
3. Continue to aggressively monitor motorized use and address violations as they occur.

ROAD AND ACCESS PLAN UNIT DESIGNATIONS

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>SUB-UNIT</u>	<u>UNIT NAME</u>	<u>SUB-UNIT NAME</u>	<u>DESIGNATION</u>
1	--	FLOWAGE	--	OPEN

1	1A	FLOWAGE	TOTOGATIC PARK	PRIMITIVE
2	--	TOTOGATIC	--	OPEN
2	2A	TOTOGATIC	DEROSIER	PRIMITIVE
3	--	WAGONNER	--	INTERMEDIATE
3	3A	WAGONNER	CEDAR CREEK	PRIMITIVE
4	--	SILENT WOOD	--	PRIMITIVE
5	--	STANBERRY	--	INTERMEDIATE
5	5A	STANBERRY	BEAVER LAKE	OPEN
6	--	GARDNER	--	INTERMEDIATE
7	--	STUNTZ	--	INTERMEDIATE
8	--	MCKENZIE	--	OPEN
8	8A	MCKENZIE	YOUTH CAMP	PRIMITIVE
8	8B	MCKENZIE	HALLSTROM	INTERMEDIATE
9	--	NAMEKAGON	--	OPEN
9	9A	NAMEKAGON	VILLAGE	PRIMITIVE
10	--	DUGAN	--	INTERMEDIATE
10	10A	DUGAN	GODFREY	OPEN
11	--	FENANDER	--	INTERMEDIATE
12	--	HARMON	--	OPEN
12	12A	HARMON	NORDIC	PRIMITIVE
13	--	SAWMILL	--	INTERMEDIATE
13	13A	SAWMILL	CANOE	PRIMITIVE
14	--	SPIDER LAKE	--	OPEN
15	--	WELSH LAKE	--	PRIMITIVE

ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS

Public motorized use of roads on the Washburn County Forest is managed by the classification of the individual unit, or sub-unit as identified in Section 770. Roads are identified as either open, open with limitations, or closed in compliance with the framework of the unit designation listed Section 760.2

ROAD AND ACCESS MAPS AND REGULATIONS

The Washburn County Forestry, Parks and Recreation Committee establishes which roads are open to public motor vehicle use and has authority to adopt restrictions on the size or type of

motorized access that is permitted on a particular road or trail. Roads and/or trails open for public motorized use are identified on official maps approved by the Committee and made available to the public.

Official Road and Access Plan maps for each unit, including any sub-units with differing designations, are included in Chapter 4000. Maps in Chapter 4000 are considered the official publication to use for determining public motorized use designations. These maps will be made available in printed form and on the Washburn County website at:

765 RECOMMENDATIONS AND POTENTIAL PROJECTS

1. Continue to inventory and classify road systems in order to better facilitate planning.
2. Continue road planning in conjunction with timber sales. Include provisions for road closures and reclamation.
3. Attempt to secure permanent easements or purchase lands necessary to assure access for timber management and for the public. Priority areas are identified in Chapter 3000.
4. Continue to upgrade road surfaces on County Forest Roads
5. Improve parking, especially adjacent to roads and highways with high traffic densities.
6. Evaluate roads open to public motorized travel, especially in the managed unit, to determine where rehabilitation projects are necessary. Attempt to secure funding to restore certain roads in order to provide a level of maintenance that is appropriate to the levels of motorized use and in a way that minimizes resource damage.

770 ROAD AND ACCESS PLAN UNIT DESIGNATION MAP

