

Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest Visitor's Guide 2014

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Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest • 4125 Forest Headquarters Road • Boulder Junction, WI 54512 • www.dnr.wi.gov

Spotlight

Enjoy the NHAL, Wisconsin's Crown Jewel

Energy Use



Dick Logan talks about energy conservation.

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Accessibility



NHAL employees increase accessibility for all. Find out how.

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Campground news



Joe Fieweger has information about reservations.

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Willow Flowage



34 rustic campsites are available along the shoreline and on the islands.

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Hey kids!



'Exploring the Extremes' is hot-off-the-presses.

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Native plants



Native plants present a wonderful opportunity. Find out more.

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Wisconsinites care deeply about the current and future use of public forests in Wisconsin. The Northern Highland American Legion (NHAL) State Forest is no exception. As the largest state-owned property, the NHAL is a vast and cherished part of Wisconsin's ecological, economic and social past, present and future. The NHAL State Forest covers 232,000 acres located in northern Wisconsin in Vilas, Oneida and Iron counties.

In 1925, the Wisconsin Legislature created the public forest to preserve the headwaters of the Wisconsin, Manitowish and Flambeau rivers – once a region of dense towering white pines denuded by logging near the turn of the last century. Retreating glaciers 10,000 years ago carved the land's structure, forming the forest's unique hills, lakes, boulders and wetlands.

The lakes and rivers are one of the primary features that draw more than two million visitors to the forest each year. Fishing, boating, swimming, canoeing and kayaking are all popular summer activities. Trails and woods roads crisscross the forest, providing opportunities for hiking, biking and snowmobiling.

Graced by some of the most consistent snowfalls in the state, the forest provides more than 400 miles of snowmobile trails that connect with hundreds of

more miles of riding opportunities. There are approximately 40 miles of groomed cross country ski trails and many more miles of ungroomed trails. There are 18 family campgrounds with 865 campsites in the forest and two outdoor group camping areas that will each accommodate a total of 80 people. Boat landings are provided at most campgrounds.

There are five family campgrounds that accept reservations: Crystal Lake, Muskie Lake, Firefly Lake, Clear Lake and Indian Mounds. There are also five remote camping areas with a total of 17 campsites, also available by reservation. Seventy-eight canoe campsites, accessible only by water, are situated along the shorelines of the forest's myriad waterways. Winter camping is permitted at the Clear Lake Campground. Many of the campgrounds also feature nature trails, picnic areas with drinking water, toilets and swimming beaches.

In addition, the forest cleans our air and water, provides habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species, and helps us sustain our quality of life. A variety of rare species inhabit the forest, including a sampling classified as endangered, threatened or sensitive. Species such as the spotted salamander, wood turtle and Cooper's hawk are quite uncommon and inconspicuous. Others such as the bald eagle, osprey and common loon



provide visitors with more frequent viewing opportunities across the forest landscape. Gray wolf packs have once again found a home within the forest boundaries and sometimes greet visitors with distinctive howls heard in the still of the night.

Hunting, subject to specific regulations, is permitted in the forest. The area is very popular with many deer, bird and small game enthusiasts.

The NHAL State Forest has also earned a reputation as one of Wisconsin's hardest working
See ENJOY... page 4

Emergency information

Hospital – Howard Young Medical Center, Woodruff, 715-356-8000

Clinic – Marshfield Clinic, Minocqua, 715-358-1000

Ambulance – dial 911

Fire – dial 911.

Disturbances – In case of a civil disturbance, notify the nearest Ranger Station, DNR office, or if necessary phone the Sheriff's Department (911). Be sure to write down auto license numbers, make and model of cars, campsite numbers, etc.

Clear Lake Ranger Station – 715-356-3668

Crystal Lake Ranger Station – 715-542-3923

Severe weather – In case of severe weather, visitors should check for updates at the Ranger Stations or tune radios to the following stations: 92.5 WJQ (Tomahawk), 94.5 WRJO (Eagle River), 95.9 WMQA (Minocqua), 98.3 WCQM (Park Falls) or 99.7 WIMI (Ironwood/Hurley).

Telephone – There is a pub-

lic pay phone located in many of the small towns in the area. Emergency telephones are available at the ranger stations during open hours. Resident managers and campground hosts have cell phones for emergencies.

Office hours – The Clear Lake and Crystal Lake ranger stations are open daily 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day. From mid-May to Memorial Day and again from Labor Day to the end of September the ranger stations are open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The rest of the year Clear Lake Ranger Station is open from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. daily. Crystal Lake Ranger Station is open as staffing allows. For Clear Lake call 715-356-3668, or for Crystal Lake call 715-542-3923. The forest superintendent is located at the Woodruff Service Center at 715-356-5211, ext. 225. Other forest operations are handled out of the Trout Lake Forest Headquarters at 715-385-2727.

Welcome from the superintendent

Welcome back to the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest and to our newspaper for 2014. I hope you enjoy the articles and updates here and take a moment to thank the advertisers that, along with the help of The Lakeland Times, make this annual publication possible.

This year we changed the schedule to prepare this paper so I'm writing while it's about 20 below (again!) and there are several feet of snow on the ground. It's an old-fashioned winter. Hopefully we are getting our cold temps for the year out of the way. Lake levels have rebounded a bit over the last year so maybe the drought is behind us and our lakes will fill up again.

You'll see some new faces on the property this year. It's fun to feel the energy from the new staff and we all benefit from their contribution. Some of the



organizational changes we've planned for several years, like completely shifting law enforcement to full-time year-round staff, are being implemented. These changes were made in an effort to provide you with better service.

Something I am excited to see happen in 2014 is that we will be upgrading many of our signs. Starting with our highway signs, you will find clearer signage to find our facilities.

We heard from you that our signs were hard to read at night and our new highway signs are in reflective lettering. And we

See WELCOME... page 4

Enjoy your time on the forest

If you have visited us within the past few years you will have no doubt seen the many efforts that the NHAL has taken to provide you with an enjoyable and sustainable recreation experience in one of the most beautiful places in the state. That tradition continues with several planned improvements to recreation areas within the forest. Included in these projects are: boat landing improvements, the replacement of many of our oldest bathroom buildings, a new bicycle trail connector in the southern part of the forest, and new signage within and on the way to our recreation facilities.

From construction projects and facility improvements, to visitor services and daily operations, it takes a great deal of work to provide each of you with satisfying recreational experiences on the forest. Fortunately, the NHAL is blessed



Melissa Baker,
Operations Supervisor

with a very hard-working and dedicated recreation team.

I hope you will take the opportunity to talk to a member of our visitor services staff during your visit. Our visitor services team is led by two full-time staff: Kim Krawczyk (Crystal Lake Ranger Station) and Rosalie Richter (Clear Lake Ranger Station). We are also very fortunate to have a great group of seasonal visitor services associates,

campground hosts and resident managers. These folks are a very friendly bunch and a great source of information on things to do in and around the forest.

Another group I would like to acknowledge is the operations team. The operations team is led by four full-time employees: Dick Logan (Facilities and Grounds Coordinator), Dan Jacoby (Boat Landings and Water Recreation Coordinator) and Tony Martinez (Trails Coordinator), and our newest team member, Joe Fieweger (Campground Coordinator). They are joined by a dedicated group of seasonal maintenance crew members. If you have enjoyed a campsite, trail, boat ramp, picnic area or any of our visitor facilities while on the forest it is because of the hard work of this team.

As you enjoy your time on the forest, I encourage you to think about all of the

hard work and dedication that goes into providing all aspects of your experience. When you see a member of the operations or visitor services teams, I hope you will take the chance to say hello. I think you will find them to be helpful, friendly, and passionate about the work they do to provide you with the best possible recreation experience.

I am very much looking forward to another great year on the forest. I welcome the chance to talk with you about what you find special about your state forest and to answer any questions you might have.

*Melissa Baker, Operations and Visitor Services Supervisor
Trout Lake Forestry Headquarters
4125 County Highway M
Boulder Junction, WI 54512
715-385-355 Extension 119*

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<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/StateForests/meet.htm#NHAL>

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Meet the 'New Guy'

I am happy to have joined the NHAL team in mid-July 2013 as the Campground Coordinator. Prior to coming to the NHAL, I worked as Park Manager at Wildcat Mountain State Park in the driftless area of southwest Wisconsin. Before that, I was a Park Ranger at Kettle Moraine State Forest – Pike Lake Unit in southeastern Wisconsin.

Starting in mid-summer was a bit overwhelming, but I'd like to think that I hit the ground running. Campgrounds were near their highest use levels of the season, so I immediately got to see how valuable our campgrounds are for such vast number of people. I'm happy to know that my work here is very important to many people. My time here so far has flown by and I am looking forward to my first full camping season on the NHAL in 2014.

My job on the forest is responsible for providing operations and programming coordination for the 18 campgrounds and two group camps within the NHAL. If that sounds like a big job, well, it certainly does keep me busy!

A big part of my job is leading the large group of people who work in our campgrounds. We have a summer crew of nine campground operations employees who are split up into three crews. These are the folks you see cleaning and maintaining our largest and busiest campgrounds. We have eight campground managers covering 10 of our rustic campgrounds. If you've camped at our outlying rustic campgrounds you have certainly met members of this dedicated group. They are the folks who check you in and clean and take care of



Joe Fieweger,
Campground
Coordinator

much of the basic maintenance in those campgrounds. And, we have a multitude of volunteer campground hosts who spend approximately five weeks at a time in many of our campgrounds. These volunteers perform a variety of tasks for us depending on which campground they are working in, and their only "payment" is the sense of satisfaction they get from helping out and a free campsite during their time volunteering here.

If you see any of these folks while you are camping here, I encourage you to say "hi", ask questions or let them know about any concerns you have about the campgrounds. You might also wish let them know that you appreciate everything they do to make your camping experience a positive one. Without their hard work we would not be able to provide the high quality camping experience that we strive for.

In addition to leading these people, I am responsible for such things as making sure that the campgrounds are safe, clean, and properly maintained, setting maintenance priorities, and identifying maintenance and development project needs.

My goal in this position is to make sure that you have a great place to camp in Wisconsin's northwoods. I have quickly come to see that many families have a decades-long tradition of visiting the NHAL, often to the same campground and even the same campsites in those campgrounds. I want to make sure that you can continue these traditions. At the same time, I will look for areas of improvement to enhance camper experiences and adapt to changes in visitor use trends.

The NHAL is a beautiful place with

some of the best campgrounds in the state. I consider myself lucky to work here. If you are camping on the forest, I hope you have a great time enjoying all that the forest has to offer. I value your feedback on what's working and what's not in our campgrounds. I hope to chat with you this summer while I'm out and about in the campgrounds. Feel free to get in touch with me with any questions or concerns about our campgrounds.

Joe Fieweger is the Campground Coordinator on the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest.

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Energy use and conservation update on the NHAL

Since this winter has been long and cold in Wisconsin and throughout the U.S. I thought I might write about propane use on the NHAL. The NHAL uses 3 forms of energy to supply heat to 5 buildings during the winter they are propane, electricity, and wood. In 2004 the forest was heating primarily with propane using an average of 10,000 gallons per winter. By the winter of 2012-13 we used under 5,000 gallons by incorporating energy conservation measures and using alternative heat sources. I expect that our propane use will be very similar to last year in spite of the cold weather because we are constantly looking for practical ways to conserve. Even though these numbers are obviously not exact they certainly are close enough to convey a point which is that energy conservation and alternative energy sources can have a significant stabilizing effect on energy use and cost.

Our approach to reduction and stabilization of energy use/cost on the NHAL starts with conservation. We have planned and completed several conservation projects with more coming over the next couple of years. Set back thermostats, air sealing, additional insulation, and entrance door upgrades are the primary methods of conservation that we have or will be incorporating into NHAL buildings. We have coupled this with



Dick Logan,
Building & Facilities
Coordinator

alternative heat sources where they are practical.

Alternative heating sources that we are currently using are geothermal heating and cooling and wood gasification. Geothermal, or ground source heat pump, provides both heating and cooling for the Clear Lake Ranger Station. This system provides 100 percent of the summer time cooling and space heating in the winter with electric resistance as a backup heat source. This has proven to be about a 25 percent less expensive method of heating and cooling a building over more traditional heating and air conditioning systems. Wood gasification is the other alternative heat source that is used and is located in the Trout Lake area. This system has replaced between 2,500 and 3,000 gallons of propane gas with wood from the forest. A wood boiler was chosen for this project because supply and price of wood are both very

stable additionally wood gasification is a relatively clean and efficient way to provide heat for our buildings. The boiler is used primarily to heat the Trout Lake office but was sized and located to supply some heat to the Trout Lake shop as well.

Even though we have made good progress in reducing and stabilizing our propane and energy use on the NHAL there is still a considerable amount of work to do. During the summer months the focus is obviously working with the

facility operations team to maintain safe, functional, and attractive facilities for our visitors. During the "off season" my priority changes to looking at ways we can further reduce propane and overall energy use while maintaining the same or even higher level of comfort in our facilities for employees and visitors.

For more information on NHAL facility energy conservation and alternative heating systems, feel free to contact me at Richard.logan@wisconsin.gov.

WELCOME

From page 1

are working hard to refine the signs within our facilities, too. Our goal is to make it easier for you to find what you need and also to provide an attractive setting for your stay.

In 2014 we surveyed more than 800 visitors at campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, and boat landings. The survey will be continued over the winter and into the spring so we get a thorough cross-section of our visitors' perspectives. This information will inform us of your preferences so that we can manage the property to better match those preferences. Some of the preliminary data has been interesting. For instance, you come here often. Campers average three visits a year and your average stay is almost a week.

On a personal level, after many years of tent camping from a motorcy-

cle, I am looking more seriously at a travel trailer. Last August I was in Glacier National Park and some hikers noticed my T-shirt from the triathlon the forest co-sponsors. They commented on how the NHAL is where they normally go to get away. The last 10 years or so I've felt like I needed to get a thousand miles away to "get away." So we'll see what happens. Maybe Mary and I will be joining you in our campgrounds.

As always, I'm interested to hear your thoughts on the property. Please share those thoughts and your stories with me and provide feedback on the changes we are undertaking. I wish you a safe and happy visit to the NHAL.

Steve Petersen
8770 Highway J
Woodruff, WI 54568
715-356-5211 x225
Steven.petersen@Wisconsin.gov

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campground host!

ENJOY

From page 1

forests. At any time, there may be 30 to 40 active timber sales in progress, so don't be surprised to see active logging operations taking place on your state forest. These timber sales provide necessary wood-based products while ensuring a healthy, sustainable forest

that visitors will use and enjoy for many years to come.

Healthy, sustainable forests equal fun, too. As a matter of fact, nearly all of the NHAL's cross country ski and mountain bike trails trace their origins to timber sales. Many visitors actively seek out new timber sales for their enhanced wildlife viewing potential, as well.




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Rangers working for you on the State Forest

Welcome back to the state forest! After a very cold and snowy winter season here we are enjoying the warmth of summer as much as you are. This year has brought some significant changes to our law enforcement program. The WDNR Division of Forestry has added more positions to our law enforcement ranks here and to go with that our rangers will be doing "off property" forest protection work as well as our usual "on property" work. These expanded duties involve enforcing timber theft laws, Managed Forest Land laws and wildland fire origin and cause determinations in an eight county area



around the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest.

New faces you will see while the rangers are on patrol are Robert "Rob"

Retallick, who transferred in from High Cliff State Park, Stan Lewis who has worked the past several seasons as a ranger at the Willow Flowage, and Neil Kent who was a state trooper in North Dakota. They have joined our veteran NHAL staff of Mark Kubisiak, Dan Perry, Julie Brooks, Chris Bartelt and me to make your stay as safe and enjoyable as possible.

As you camp, hike, fish, bike and take advantage of the many other recreation activities on the forest, I hope you will take some time to visit with one of our rangers. They will be happy to stop and

chat with you. Their inside knowledge can help you with a tip about the best hiking trails or where the fish are biting, as well as any questions you might have about forest rules.

I hope you have a safe and enjoyable visit to your state forest. Please contact me with any questions or comments you may have.

*Brett Bockhop, Ranger Supervisor
Clear Lake Ranger Station
8282 Woodruff Rd.
Woodruff, WI 54568
Phone 715-356-4752
Brett.Bockhop@wisconsin.gov*

Recreation is accessible to all on the NHAL



Employees on the NHAL State forest are always looking to improve accessibility on the property. Family campgrounds, canoe campsites, boat landings, trails, and shooting ranges are places we have improved accessibility. Accessibility improvements do not only pertain to those in wheel chairs. Many people use walkers or canes for balance and are included in our plans to expand mobility.

Campgrounds

Many of our family campgrounds provide a full range of accessible facilities for campers. Each of the shower buildings on the property has an accessible bathroom with appropriate fixtures and a private shower stall. People with mobility needs should inquire at the ranger station for access to this locked facility. In addition, we have several accessible campsites in the family campgrounds which have accessible picnic tables

(with one end that one can "wheel under") and raised fire grates. The following sites are accessible:

Canoe Campsite

There are many campsites that are accessible by canoe only on the NHAL. These sites are available for one night only on a first-come first serve basis and are free to use. One of these sites, on Boulder Lake, has an accessible dock, raised fire ring, wheel-under table and a latrine nearby. This site can be busy in July and August.

Fishing Docks

The NHAL has three accessible fishing docks with benches and accessible railings. These are located at Upper Gresham Campground, Clear Lake Picnic Area, and the Carrol Lake Boat Landing parking area. The fishing dock at Carrol Lake also has an accessible picnic table and grill along the path to the dock.

Making a smooth transition area for all types of mobility impairments is important to us. Many of the existing docks have a transition plate which bridges the dock surface to the approach area. The transition plate eliminates the need for a step up from the asphalt to the surface of the dock.

There are several other docks managed by local communities that may also

serve your needs. One of these is the town dock in Minocqua. Two more are managed by the town of Sayner and are located on Plum Lake. The first of these is by the post office on Plum Lake in the town of Sayner and the second is a dock built on an old wood bridge on Plum Lake, visible from Highway N. Parking for this site is off Hwy N and next to the Plum Creek with a rather long path leading to the dock.

Trails

The Tom Roberts Trail is an accessible on-quarter mile paved nature trail located behind the Nature Center at Crystal Lake Picnic Area. This paved trail can be used by people with varying degrees of mobility. It can be a pleasant experience to walk or wheel on a smooth paved surface that does not have vehicle traffic.

Shooting Ranges

The Caywood Shooting range on the NHAL, located north of Minocqua on HWY 51, has a covered shooting station with accessible bench and path to the 50 and 100 yard targets.

We continue to strive to help people access the areas they wish to explore. We welcome your comments about our accessible facilities and your ideas for where we could provide additional



Designated accessible campsites (all of these sites are reservable):

Crystal Lake:	438
	463 (electric)
Musky Lake:	318
Firefly Lake:	222
	271 (electric)
Clear Lake:	800

Crystal, Musky, Clear and Firefly all have designated accessible showers.

access in the future.

Dan Jacoby is the NHAL Boat Landing Coordinator and can be reached at 715-385-3355 extension 118.

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Coming in 2015 – Reservations at Big Lake and Sandy Beach Campgrounds

There has been a trend over the past several years toward increased use of our campground reservation system. We are finding that more so than in the past, campers want to have their campsite reserved in advance. Some folks want to make sure that they can camp on a specific campsite, while others simply want the peace of mind of knowing that they have a campsite waiting for them when they arrive (particularly if they are traveling a long distance to get here). And in our busiest campgrounds, reservations are highly recommended just to make sure that you have a place to camp when you arrive.

Of the 18 campgrounds here at Northern Highland American Legion

State Forest, only six offer reservable campsites in the 2014 camping season. Beginning in the 2015 camping season, reservations will also be accepted at Big Lake and Sandy Beach campgrounds. Check with the managers of those campgrounds, our ranger stations, or our website for more information about which campsites will be reservable and when you can start making reservations for Big Lake and Sandy Beach. Reservations will certainly not be required at these campgrounds, as a large portion of the campsites will remain non-reservable, but those folks who prefer to make reservations will now be able to do so at these two campgrounds.

For those campers who return to Big Lake or Sandy Beach year after year, please check to see if your favorite campsite is going to be reservable in 2015. If it is, you will want to consider making a reservation for next year.

If you have never camped at Big Lake or Sandy Beach, I encourage you to make a reservation in 2015 to check out one or both of them. Both are quieter, less busy campgrounds. Both campgrounds also have nice beaches and are on good fishing lakes. With a newly completed trail along Highway K, Big Lake is in close proximity to the vast local network of paved bike trails. Sandy Beach has a large picnic area and is in close proximity to the Powell

Trail and Powell Marsh State Wildlife Area.

For those of you who do not want to or like to make reservations, we will continue to have plenty of non-reservable campsites. NHAL has always held a unique niche in providing a large number of non-reservable campsites and will continue to do so.

Let me know your thoughts on the expansion of the campsite reservation system on the state forest. Your input will be valuable as we consider any further addition of campgrounds to the reservation system here at NHAL.

Joe Fieweger is the Campground Coordinator on the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest.



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- 3 Outstanding Angler Achievement Awards
- Fishing Lake Superior and Lake Michigan

Kemp Natural Resources Station: research & teaching Northwoods style

By Tom Steel, Ph.D.
UW Kemp Research Station

Towering trees. Crystal clear lakes. Clean, fresh air. And abundant wildlife. These are the things that make the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest a special place. They are the features that draw you back to visit each year. But what you may be surprised to learn is that these same features—healthy forests and precious waters—make the NHAL State Forest a unique classroom and a remarkable laboratory.

Perched on the edge of the NHAL is the Kemp Natural Resources Station. Kemp is a UW-Madison research and teaching facility dedicated to the conservation of our natural resources. Each year scientists and students from around the state and across the country come to Kemp to study the region's woods and waters. Much of their work occurs among the diverse ecological communities of the NHAL.

For scientists, the NHAL is a living laboratory where they can study the complexities of the natural world. The scope of their work is incredibly diverse, ranging from detailed studies of a specific plant or animal to large-scale investigations of entire ecosystems. Regardless of the focus, each study shares the same goal: to create new knowledge that will inform the management and sustainable use of our environment.

For students, the NHAL is an extraordinary classroom. It is a place where theory comes alive, where they can see, smell, touch and hear ecological princi-

ples in action. It is a place where they can immerse themselves, quite literally, in their studies.

The need for field stations, like UW-Madison's Kemp and Trout Lake Stations, has never been greater. As society

places increasing demands on our environment, we must increasingly look to science to provide innovative answers regarding sustainable resource use. The ability to study and learn on the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest

is, quite simply, priceless.

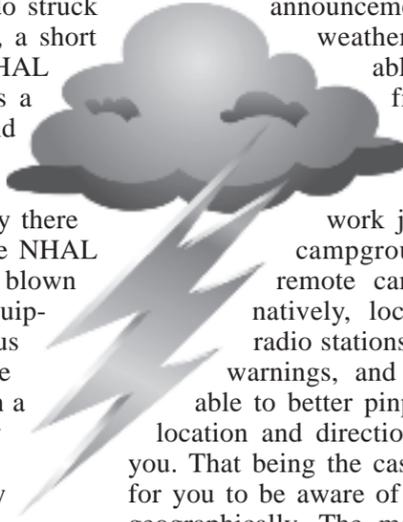
To learn more about Kemp Station, including our summer outreach series, visit us on-line at: www.kemp.wisc.edu; send an email to kemp@cals.wisc.edu; or call us at 715-358-5667.

Weather warnings? What to do

On July 27, 2010, a tornado struck the Turtle Flambeau Flowage, a short distance northwest of the NHAL State Forest. The flowage has a number of remote campsites and many people were camped that night. There were a few serious injuries, and thankfully there were no fatalities. Here on the NHAL that night, we had some trees blown down and some camping equipment damaged, but no serious injuries. Our facilities were cleaned up and repaired within a few days. We were pretty lucky that night. If the tornado's course had been twenty miles south, some of our campgrounds could have seen serious damage.

The National Weather Service announces dangerous weather. They will issue "watches" if conditions offer potential for severe weather. "Warnings" are issued if there is a likelihood of severe weather, or if it is directly reported. Weather forecasting has evolved to become very accurate and warnings should be taken seriously.

The easiest way to receive weather



announcements is from a weather radio, available at low cost from many stores. Battery operated, they will work just fine in our campgrounds and remote campsites. Alternatively, local commercial radio stations will broadcast warnings, and these may be able to better pinpoint a storm's location and direction of travel for you. That being the case, it is helpful for you to be aware of where you are geographically. The most local radio stations for the NHAL area are: FM 92.5 WJJQ; 94.5 WRJO; 95.9 WMQA; 98.3 WCQM; and 99.7 WIMI.

Do not depend on Rangers or other staff to provide warnings to you. As much as we would like to assure we can do this, we simply can not. To the degree that we are able, we will do so, but our staff is spread too thin and may not be positioned to be effective, nor do we staff 24 hours a day. Your safety is ultimately in your own hands.

If severe weather threatens, begin to form a plan of what you would do if a warning is announced. You might consider picking up your campsite and rolling up your awning. Maybe take down your picnic awning. Consider where you would seek shelter and how you would get there. Make plans with your family to establish a meeting place if you get separated.

When you receive a warning, seek shelter. As safe as your vehicle may seem, many people have been injured or killed within them during violent weather. Seek shelter in low lying areas or within sturdy buildings, like our shower buildings or concrete toilet buildings. Our recently constructed solid concrete toilet buildings are built to sustain very high winds. At the Turtle Flambeau Flowage area, many people improvised and sought shelter under the massive log constructed picnic tables or at the shoreline.

Severe weather can lead to tragedy. Modern forecasting and planning on your part can help to keep you safe. Please take a few minutes to plan how you would respond to a severe weather warning.

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dnr.wi.gov keyword "fire"

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Trails: a year-round experience

The NHAL State Forest is home to an abundance of maintained multi-use trail systems. The trails offer opportunities for hiking, biking and self-guided nature walks in the spring, summer and fall, along with snowshoeing and cross-country skiing in the winter. A universally accessible trail, the Tom Roberts Memorial Trail, starts at the Crystal Nature Center in the Crystal Campground Day Use Area. It is paved and less than a mile long.

Hiking is allowed anywhere on the NHAL, providing healthful fun and an enjoyable way to get close to nature while earning a better understanding of the forest environment. There are hundreds of miles of old logging roads and snowmobile trails that provide excellent opportunities for exploration, as well. Keep in mind that hiking unmarked trails demands special atten-

tion to help prevent a short walk from turning into an arduous trek. Take note of the route into the forest to find the corresponding route out.

Be aware that the trails vary in difficulty and conditions can change rapidly due to weather and heavy use. Designated biking and groomed ski trails require a state trail pass for those patrons 16 years of age and older. Pets are not allowed on nature trails or groomed ski trails.

The forest offers four interpretive nature trails – North Trout, Fallison, Raven and Star Lake. All are designed to teach a little about forest history, wildlife, plants and the cultural history of the area. Three forest trails are designated for mountain biking – Raven, Lumberjack and Powell. Cross country skiing is a popular winter sport. Four trails on the forest are groomed for skiing when snow conditions permit –



Staff photograph

Skiing on the Raven Trail.

Escanaba, Madeline, Raven and McNaughton. The Shannon Trail is groomed by volunteers. There are also five designated snowshoe trails – North Trout, Fallison, Star Lake, Lumberjack and Powell. The parking lots at the trailheads are plowed for your convenience.



Staff photograph

Hiking on the Lumberjack Trail.

For those who care to break their own trail the possibilities for adventure are endless.

So visit a trail to look, listen and enjoy the year-round beauty and splendor of the NHAL State Forest and Wisconsin's Northwoods.



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New bathroom cleaning hours

Many of you have expressed frustration with the times that some shower buildings are closed for cleaning during the day. It is important to us that we provide you with clean, safe, and functional facilities. That often means that we have to clean facilities at a time when some visitors would like to use them. We do, however, want to make adjustments where we can to improve our service.

With that in mind, we are re-arranging how we clean our shower facilities in the Crystal/Musky/Firefly area. Rather than having one team cleaning a shower building at a time, we are going to put two teams on each building in the Northern part of the forest. That will allow us to clean the buildings much more quickly while also allow-

ing us to close only one building at a time.

You can help by not entering a shower building during cleaning hours unless you are sure that they have completed their work on that building. That will allow us to work more efficiently and to allow visitors access to the building as quickly as possible.

The new cleaning times are:

Crystal shower building

6:30 – 8:00 am

Firefly shower building

7:00 – 8:30 am

Big Musky shower building

8:00 – 9:30 am

The bathroom cleaning hours in Clear Lake Campground will remain the same as last year.

Register your recreation vehicle online

By Linda Winters
WDNR

Fresh gas in the tank? Check! Life preservers on board? Check! Kids and dog loaded in the car and ready to head up north? Check! Boat decals good? Uh-oh!

Don't worry! GO GREEN and save time, energy, stamps, and paper with the convenient, secure and easy do-it-yourself on-line registration of your recreational vehicle. Go online and register your boat immediately, print out your temporary operator's receipt, and get underway!

Online registration allows you to renew the registration of your boat, ATV, UTV and snowmobile you currently own. You can even transfer into your

name a recently purchased ATV, UTV, snowmobile or boat under 16 feet in length. The system guides you through and calculates the fees for you. You can even submit multiple registration requests under one payment for a single \$1 processing fee plus registration fees.

After payment is submitted, you will be provided a Temporary Operating Receipt which makes you legal to use your recreational vehicle immediately. Just go to dnr.wi.gov and click on "register boat/ATV/snow." Decals and your certificate will arrive about a week after registering. Go Forest Green – provide your email address so DNR can alert you via email when your vehicles are about to expire.

Linda Winters is a Customer Service Training officer for the WDNR

Camping without power

By Kent Plowman

The nice thing about being a camper is we can all do it differently. Some of us like to "rough it" without any conveniences of home. No power, no roof over our head, no bathroom, etc. Some of us, like me, want my house brought with me: power, roof over my head, and a hot shower when I want it.

If you are in the latter group, there are some challenges providing enough power to enjoy all of the conveniences of home. As of now, none of the Northern Highland State Forest Campgrounds have 110v electricity. Most modern towable and motorized campers will work with just a 12V battery or batteries providing the power we need. The only items that will not work on a 12V battery are the air conditioning and microwave oven.

Let's look at the items you will need to "dry" camp without 110v electricity. The camper's water pump, refrigerator, entertainment system, etc. will work off a 12V system already in your unit. If you "dry" camp a lot, I would recommend you have two batteries. The best is to use what is called a "deep cycle" battery. It is designed to hold a charge longer. The item that will draw down the battery the most is the

water pump. Try to take shorter showers than at home to conserve the battery life. Items like entertainment systems and refrigerators do not draw a lot from the battery.

Another item you might want when you are "dry" camping is a generator. The size of generator you will need will depend on what you want to do with it. If you are only looking to charge your battery system, a 1000 watt generator will do just fine. Just plug it into the camper's 110V cord, and it will recharge the battery in an hour

or two. If you are looking to run the air conditioning or microwave, you will need at least a 3000 watt generator. Some companies claim as low as a 2400 watt unit will also work, but I recommend a 3000 watt unit to be sure it will get the job done.

Remember, there are only certain hours you can use your generator in the campground, so be sure to check the rules for generator use, and also get a generator permit.

You will also need to follow some safety rules. Never have the generators

exhaust pointing at the camper or any flammable items, like lighter fluid or a gas can you have with you. You will also need to make sure all windows in the area of the generator are closed. This will prevent carbon monoxide from entering the unit. These rules also apply if you are tent camping. The other thing to do when using a generator is to always remember to be courteous to your surrounding campers.

With these simple rules, we all can enjoy our camping experience.

Water resources of the forest

The Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest is located within the most abundant and closely concentrated surface water resource region in Wisconsin. More than 900 lakes lie within the forest boundaries. These waters range from numerous unnamed lakes of less than 10 surface acres to the nearly 4,000 acres comprising Trout Lake. Numerous streams and rivers create a network of "roads" between the lakes.

Major recreational users of these water resources include anglers, swimmers, skiers, boaters, canoeists and sightseers.

These activities generate a tourist-oriented recreational industry within and surrounding the forest - an industry which has significant economic importance to the area.

A generalized listing of the sport fishery includes muskellunge, northern pike, walleye, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass and the commonly classified pan-fish species; bluegills, perch, crappies, pumpkinseed and bullheads. Cold water species include brook, brown and rainbow trout.

Other unique species that contribute to the sport fishery are sturgeon in the Manitowish River system, lake trout and

whitefish in Trout Lake, and cisco, which are more commonly associated with the larger, deeper lakes.

With the diversity of fish species present, all types of angler interest can be satisfied. Whether your preference is to pitch a bucktail over a weed bed in hopes of catching a muskie, fishing a jig and minnow on a rock bar for walleye, slipping a canoe into a spring fed pond in the hopes of getting a fat brook trout, or just flipping a worm near a fallen tree for pan-fish, the opportunity exists within the state forest.

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Dear Steve ...

Dear Steve,

I am Sagittarius and my spouse is an Aries and we would like to find a great place to camp that offers a view of the night sky so we can find our constellations.

Star Lotus

Dear Star:

Your stars have aligned for a great camping experience. There are many lakes on the NHAL that have no development other than primitive campgrounds along their shores. In addition, many are on no motor or electric motor only lakes. One good example of this is the Starrett Lake Campground. Visitors to this campground can experience true Zen as they appreciate the true darkness and sounds of nature.

Dear Steve,

Why am I not allowed to take my pet onto nature trails or to the beach? My dog is a part of my family and I would like include him in all parts of our vacation. Aren't we all part of nature?

Dog Gone Frustrated

Dear Dog Gone:

I also have a dog that is a member of my family. I understand how important pets are to our visitors, and most visitors are very responsible with their pets while on the property. Unfortunately, not all pet owners follow leash rules, pick up after their pets, or exercise good judgment when deciding if their pet is "ready" to interact with the public. In the past, this has caused problems on the property.

To avoid conflict between pets and people, the NHAL has designated several areas where pets are not allowed; either because of the concentration of people (as in beach areas) or where being close to nature and seeing wildlife is a primary



goal (as on nature trails). We do, however, have many areas where pets are allowed. For information on where you can take your pet on the property, please visit Crystal Lake or Clear Lake Ranger Station.

Dear Steve,

Boy, some of these primitive toilet buildings sure are stinky! Is there anything you can do to keep down the smell?

P. U. Pew

Dear P.U.:

The NHAL has over 100 primitive toilet buildings on the property. Many of these are over 50 years old. Needless to say, the technology we have today is not included in those buildings. The good news is we are in the midst of a program to replace many of our oldest toilet buildings on the property. These build-

ings will be replaced with new, state of the art vault toilet buildings that release significantly less odor. In fact, the first phase of this project has already been completed. If you would like to see one of the newer toilet buildings, please visit the upper level of the Clear Lake Picnic Area.

Dear Steve,

Why are the speed limits so low in the campgrounds and picnic areas? And why are there so many stop signs? Sometimes when I am out in my car I just want to roll down my windows and let 'er rip.

Speedy Driver

Dear Speedy:

While it is a lot of fun to roll down

your windows, turn up your music, and drive without care, our campgrounds and picnic areas are not good places to do that. Each year, the NHAL hosts over 2 million visitors. This means that you will often encounter people, both adults and children, walking and bicycling along our forest roads.

With all of these people, cars, and bicycles sharing the roadway, it is important that drivers exercise extreme caution. Our traffic regulations exist to provide a safe and pleasant environment for all visitors. So while you are in the recreation areas, please slow down, follow all traffic signs, and enjoy the sights and sounds of the forest.

Have a question? Email Steven.petersen@Wisconsin.gov

Not lost on Lost Canoe lake



Dean Baker photograph

Canada geese parents find the quiet waters of Lost Canoe Lake a great place to prepare their goslings for the world.

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Visit the North Lakeland Discovery Center

The North Lakeland Discovery Center (NLDC), in Manitowish Waters, is a place where people can come to connect to the natural world. Our location within the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest is beautifully remote, surrounded by water and forests, and yet accessible to visitors. Whether you have vast experience in the outdoors or are new to exploring, we have a program or drop-in activity for your interests and skill levels.

Enjoy scheduled programs including weekly nature hikes, themed canoe trips, and an array of youth and family eco-learning and wildlife-based activities. Drop-in opportunities include canoeing and kayaking on 25-acre Statehouse Lake, visiting the Nature Nook classroom paired with Saturday activities, geocaching, fishing, walking along our 16-station interpretive trail, and much more.

The North Lakeland Discovery Center is a nature-based education and community center with a mission to naturally inspire and enrich lives through meaningful connections with nature, people and community. The diverse, undeveloped land surrounding the site provides for unparalleled teaching and learning opportunities and feature lake, river, mixed forest and bog environments ideal for a Northwoods family adventure.

Enjoy the Discovery Center year round through activities like hiking, biking, skiing, snowshoeing and wildlife watching along our 12-mile trail system. The terrain is gentle and winds through the woods, along the lake, bog and nearby Manitowish River allowing you to

explore a variety of habitats each with their own unique plants and animals. Our trails are OPEN TO EVERYONE from dawn to dusk - your donations help to keep the system well-maintained and safe.

Experience the Northwoods' beautiful

natural settings and friendly hospitality in Manitowish Waters - an official Wisconsin Bird City - come explore! For more information call the Discovery Center at 715-543-2085. The Discovery Center is located on CTH W just 1.2 miles north of USH 51. Visit us today.

Nixon Lake paddlers



Dean Baker photograph

Canoeing on the NHAL is a peaceful, easy way to enjoy nature and take in the breathtaking scenery.

THINK YOUR FIRE IS OUT?
CHECK AGAIN!

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Sunday: 11am-10pm (kitchen closes at 9pm)

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NHAL State Forest rules and regulations

State forests are special areas that have been established to protect our natural heritage. We all are given the responsibility to protect these great places. Listed below are some guidelines for you to follow to enjoy your visit and to comply with common rules and regulations. These rules are for you, your friends and family's safety and enjoyment. Feel free to report any activity that is illegal or that you feel jeopardizes someone's safety. Law enforcement rangers routinely patrol the state forest. For more information please ask a Ranger or stop and ask staff at the Crystal and Clear Lake Ranger Stations. Information is also found on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources website at www.dnr.wi.gov.

Vehicles/drivers

Please, always be aware and observant while driving; follow speed limits, one-way roads, obey stop signs, and all other traffic signs. We have a large amount of children, pets, bicycles, and people recreating in the area.

Camping

All campers must obtain a camping permit to secure a campsite. All camping permits expire at 3 p.m. on the last day of the

permit; the camping unit and all equipment must be removed by 3 p.m. Camping is allowed in designated areas only and only one family or individual group of six people is allowed to occupy each campsite. Only registered campers are allowed in the campground after 11 p.m., which is also the start of quiet hours. Please set up your camping unit on the designated camping pad and park all wheeled vehicles on the campsite drive.

Firewood

Movement of firewood is restricted, both from out-of-state and in-state sources. Please ask us about current firewood restrictions as we are working very hard to restrict the movement of a destructive invasive species, the Emerald Ash Borer.

Vehicle admission sticker

An admission sticker is required when a motor vehicle is operated within a designated public use fee area and it must be fully attached to the windshield by its own adhesive.

Trail passes

Are required for biking and skiing on designated trails for people 16 years and older.

Pets

Must be on a leash no longer than eight feet and under control at all times. Please clean up after your pet. Pets are not allowed in buildings, picnic areas, beaches, or on nature trails or groomed ski trails. Pets can not be left unattended; please do not leave your pet in a vehicle.

Fires

Are allowed in designated fire rings and grills for grilling food. Fires can not be left unattended and must be fully extinguished before leaving. Never burn garbage – it is illegal and releases pollutants. Campfires should be completely contained within the fire ring. Please do not move the fire rings. Build a campfire, not a bonfire.

Fireworks

You can not possess or discharge fireworks. Rule of thumb: anything that makes

a noise, throws sparks, or lifts off the ground cannot be used.

Boats

No person may operate a boat within a water area marked by buoys or other approved regulatory devices as a swimming beach; or operate a boat in a restricted use area contrary to regulatory notice marked on buoys or other approved regulatory devices.

Beaches

No person may possess or consume any food or beverage, or use any soap, detergent or shampoo on any swimming beach or in the water adjacent to any swimming beach. No person may fish in any marked swimming beach.

*Thank you,
Your State Forest
Law Enforcement Rangers*

Double campsite use policy

Double sites are designed to allow two separate camping parties to camp close together in a group-like setting. When making a reservation, or at check-in if the site is not reservable, campers choosing a double site will be charged for both halves of the campsite. Upon check-in, campers will be required to provide the names, vehicle license plate information, and camping unit information for the camping party on the other half of their double site. A usable camping unit must be set up on each side of the double site by 11 p.m. on check-in day. A double site cannot be reserved/registered for a single camping party. The fee for a double site is twice that of a single site. Double sites can accommodate two camping units and a maximum of 12 campers.





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- Bring emergency supplies such as maps, flares, and a first aid kit. Put them in a floating pouch.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
- Check the boat landing for any local regulations applicable on the waterway where you will be boating.



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Become a Citizen Scientist: help keep worms out of Wisconsin's woods

By Bernie Williams

According to research and depending on soil quality, there can be anywhere from 250,000 to 1.75 million earthworms per acre of land. Acres with poor quality soil will have closer to the 250,000 range; while acres with good quality soil, like farm land and our forests will have closer to 1.75 million earthworms per acre. What makes this even more incredible is that a typical earthworm can process about 10 pounds of organic material per worm per year. While this is certainly impressive, it has an incredibly large impact to the overall health of the forest. A quick example of the scale of this impact: The American Legion State Forest has 232,000 acres and if you were to assume earthworms inhabited all these acres, the math would equate to 406,000,000,000 (406 billion!) earthworms. That's a lot of worms!

So how does the presence of earthworms affect the health of the forest? Remember that earthworms are not

native to Wisconsin's forests. Our native earthworms were wiped out during the last ice age. Remember the 10 pounds of

organic material? A forest floor in late fall is covered in fallen leaves (the duff layer). Earthworms consume these leaves, which are essential in protecting the soil and providing the proper environment for tree seedlings and native plants to germinate and grow. When a forest becomes invaded by earthworms, the soil is exposed and erosion occurs. Often, invasive plants take the place of our native plant species.

What can you do to help? Get involved in our citizen based monitoring. Help us document the spread and abundance of earthworms on our forested lands and preserve our natural areas. Earthworm free areas still exist!

For more information contact:
Bernie Williams
608-266-0624
bernadette.williams@wisconsin.gov
dnr.wi.gov SEARCH "invasives"



Wisconsin Worm Watch Wants YOU!

Earthworms are not native to Wisconsin forests. The worms here are invasive and harming the health of our forests. Help us document the spread and abundance of earthworms and preserve our natural areas.

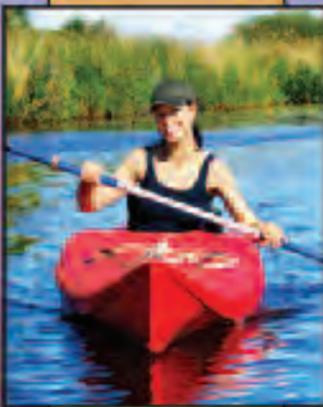
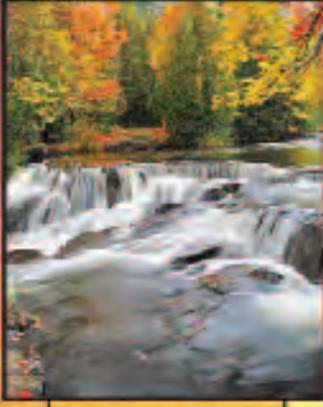
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May 23 - Oct. 10 - Minocqua Farmers Market (Fridays)
May 24 - Woodruff Memorial Classic Car Show
May 31 - June 1 - June Bloom Arts & Crafts Festival
June 13 - 14 - Summer Thunder Motorcycle Rally
June 14 - Devil's Elbow 5K Sunset Trail Run/Walk
June 21 - Minocqua Island Swim Challenge
July 4 - Independence Day Festivities
July 5 - Muggy Buggy 5K & Muggy Buggy X
July 15 - 16 - Culpepper & Merriweather Circus
July 19 - Bear Cupboard Run
July 25 - 27 - Antique & Classic Wooden Boat Show
Aug. 2 - Mary Mile & 5K
Aug. 2-3 - Arbor Vitae Fireman's Picnic
Aug. 7 - After Loon Delight Arts & Crafts Fair
Aug. 9 - Minocqua Triathlon
Aug. 30 - Minocqua/Kawaguesaga Pig Roast
Aug. 31 - No Frills Marathon
Sept. 20 - Lake Tomahawk Harvest Festival
Sept. 27 - Beef-a-Rama & Rump Roast Run
Oct. 11 - Harvest of Holidays
Oct. 25 - Hall-O-Wine
Nov. 8 - 23rd Annual Buck Rut 5K & Zombie Run
Nov. 27 - Christmas in Minocqua
Dec. 27 - Light Up the Night Concert
Dec. 31 - New Year's Eve Fireworks and Chill Feed

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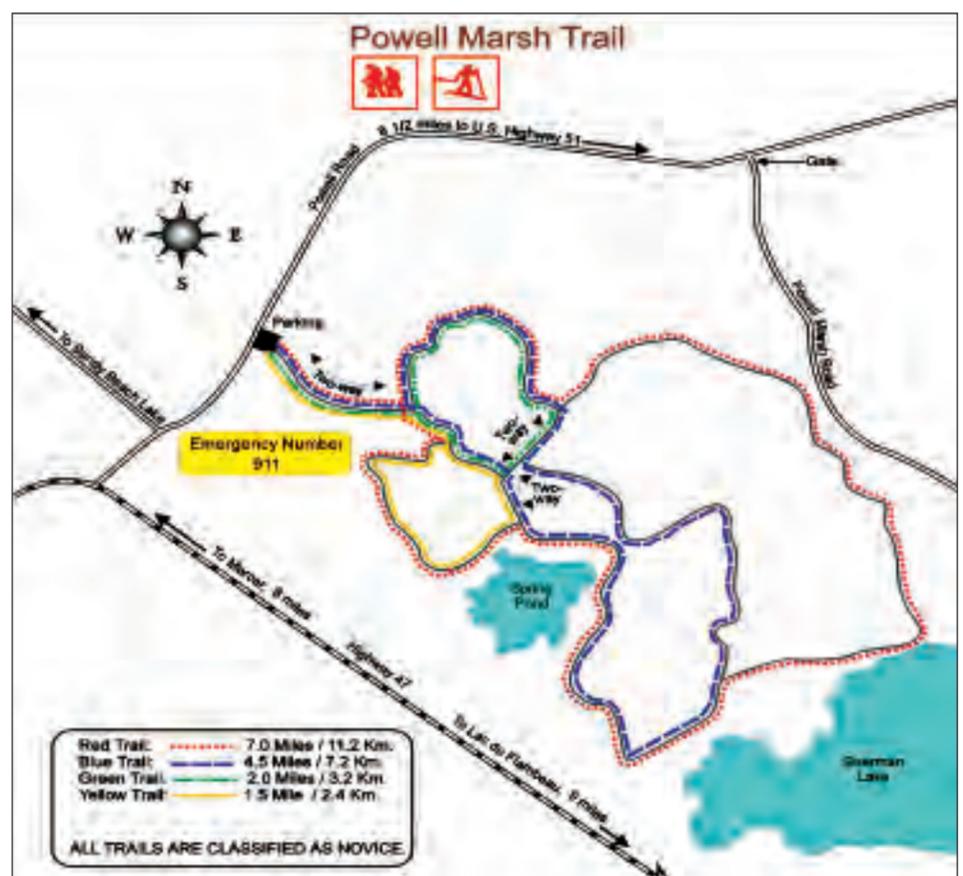
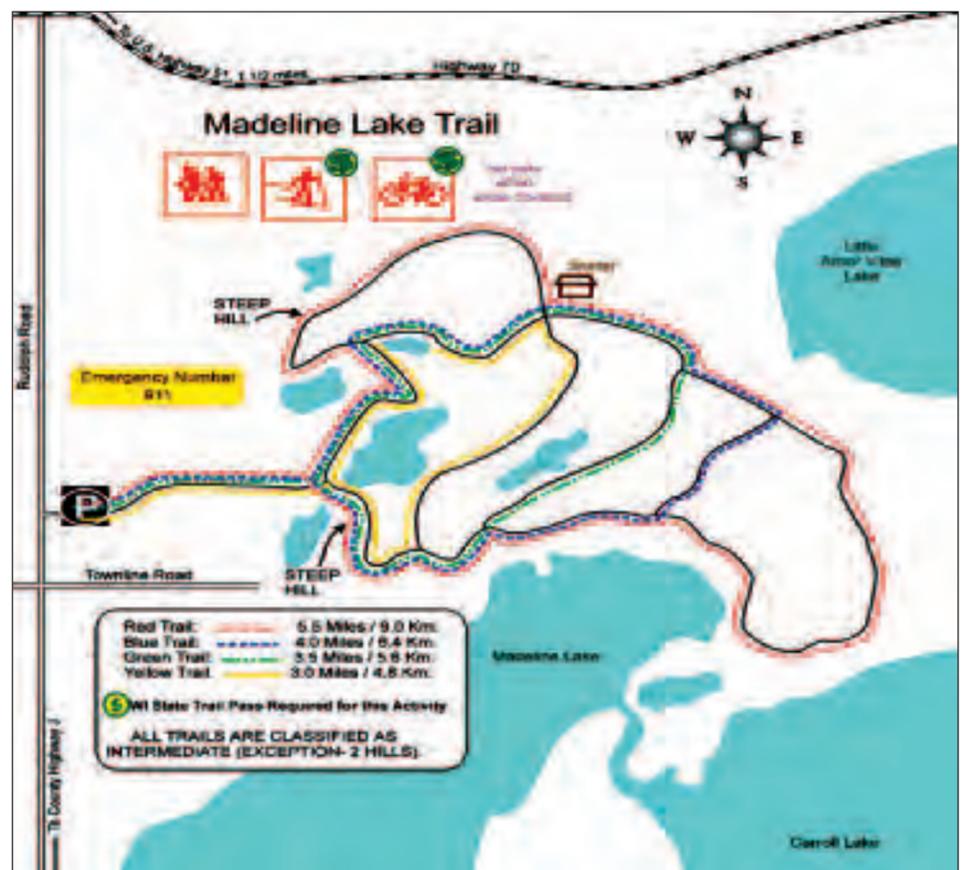
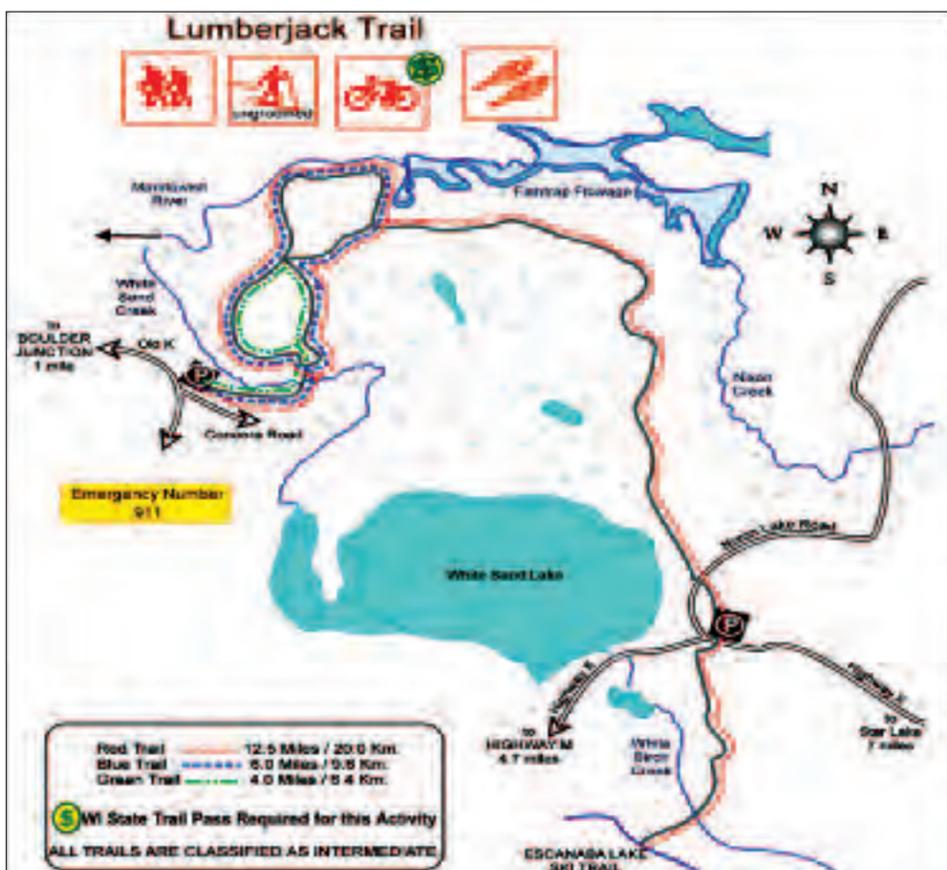
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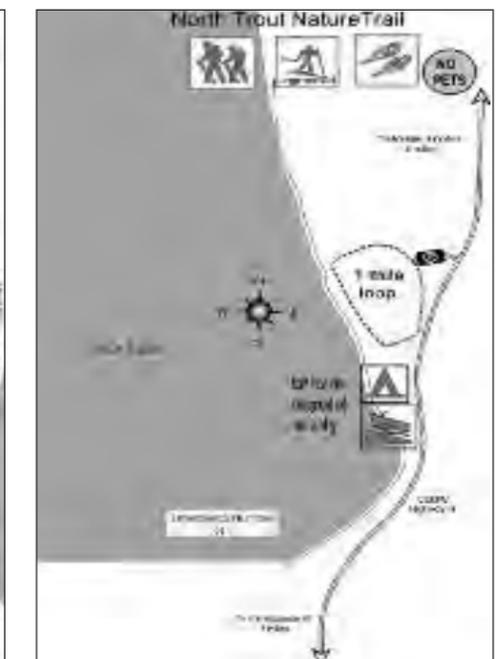
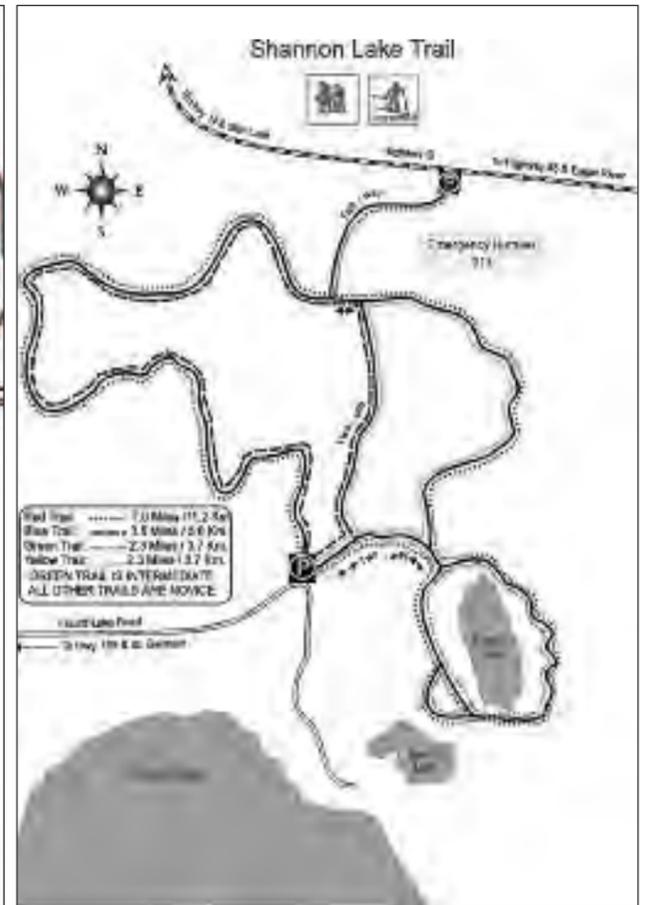
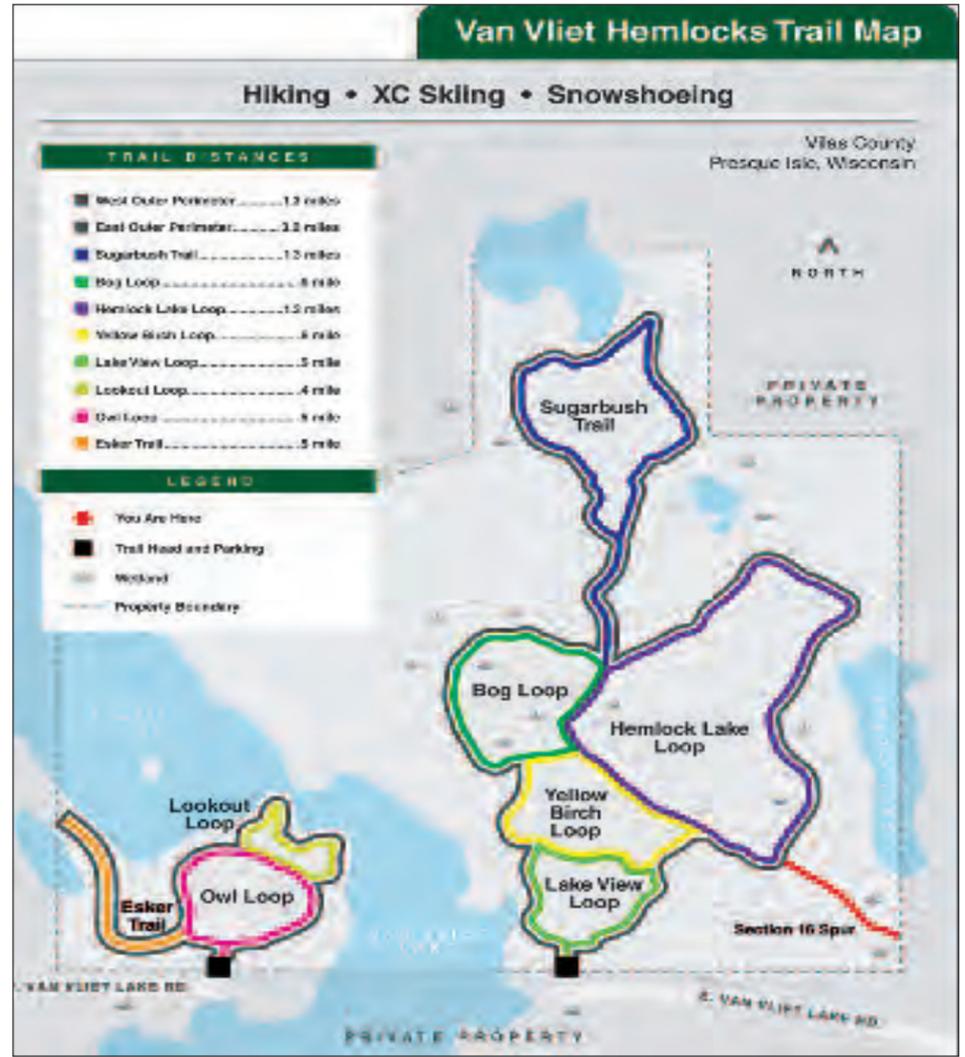
"ignite the flames of passion"



Trail Maps



Trail Maps



Willow Flowage offers stunning wilderness camp sites

With limited development and access, the Willow Flowage is a large island-studded reservoir with a truly wild flavor.

The property is located in west central Oneida County and includes 73 miles of shoreline (95 percent of which is undeveloped), 106 islands and seven boat landings.

The entire property encompasses more than 17,000 acres where hunting, fishing and hiking opportunities abound.

There are 34 rustic campsites scattered along the shoreline and islands. All campsites are occupied on a first-come, first-serve basis with no registration, no reservations and no fees.

Campsite accommodations include a fire ring with cooking grill, picnic table and outdoor toilet.

Designated as an Outstanding Resource Water in 1997, the Willow Flowage supports a diversity of aquatic plants, fish, and wildlife.

Abundant walleye and panfish populations, along with northern pike, muskellunge and large and smallmouth bass make fishing the primary draw. White-tailed deer, bear, ruffed grouse, ducks, loons and even wolves roam the area.

An active forestry program is in place on the Willow Flowage to promote wildlife, emphasize forest diversity and promote a natural and aesthetically pleasing appearance.

Future thinning of selected trees and occasional prescribed burns will help restore the shoreline to historic forest conditions dominated by long-lived tree species such as red and white pine.



Staff photograph

There are 34 rustic campsites scattered along the shoreline and islands of the Willow Flowage. There is no fee for using the campsites, but they are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Six state-owned boat landings provide access for motor boats, canoes and kayaks.

The two boat landings on the east side of the property near the dam received a face-lift in summer 2007. Parking areas were paved and expanded

and better toilet facilities and drinking water facilities were added.

The Willow Flowage is accessible from Hwy. 51 by heading west on Hwy. Y just south of Hazelhurst. For a wilderness experience described as “almost Canada,” come visit the Willow

Flowage Scenic Waters Area.

For more information, contact property manager Tom Shockley 358-9259. Or, download a map of the flowage online at <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/StateForests/SF-NH-AL/NH-AL-willow.htm>.



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The Soldiers of Poverty tells the true story of Mike Kerkes who was rescued from the grips of the Great Depression when he joined Company 692 of the Civilian Conservation Corps. After gaining experience hewing beams for the main lodge at Giant City Park in Makanda, IL, he advanced as a lead carpenter building prairie cabins and shelters. In 1935, this experienced company was transferred to Copper Falls State Park in Mellen, WI where Mike was promoted to carpentry field supervisor of the main lodge. Reads like a novel filled with humor, romance, adventure and danger — a tribute to the men of the CCC. \$21.95



My Life to My Children by Jack Vilas is an edited memoir originally written in 1929 but never published until now. July 1, 2013 is the 100th anniversary of the first successful flight over Lake Michigan (St. Joe's, MI to Grant Park, IL) where Jack earned himself a place in aviation history. Enjoy page-turning descriptions of his Lake Michigan flight in a 1913 Curtiss flying yacht and his experiences as the first “flying fire warden” over Trout Lake in Boulder Junction. Loaded with original pictures — a **must read** for lovers of pioneer aviation and northern Wisconsin history. \$21.95

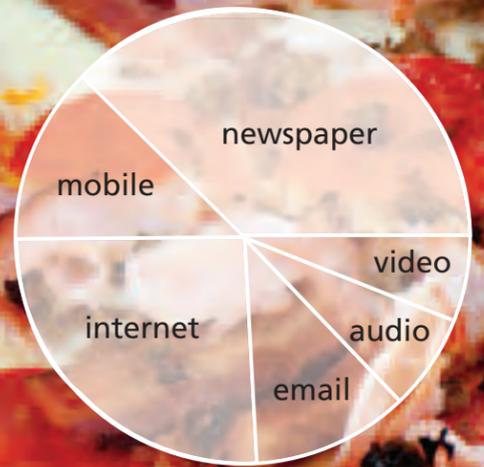


Rustic Reflections of Copper Falls State Park contains the petitions to the Wisconsin Office of Historic Preservation that placed the park site on the National Register of Historic Places. Copper Falls contains one of the largest collections of rustic architecture from the CCC and WPA era and also qualified for National Register status in the areas of conservation and recreation. \$9.95



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The end result is a 'lottza mottza!'

To the top



Dean Baker photograph

The Fallison Lake Trail stairway.

Trailblazing on NHAL

By Tony Martinez
Trails Coordinator, NHAL

While out enjoying the trails on the forest one might see trail work being done during any season of the year. The clearing of obstructions, grooming for skiing, or repairing erosion are just a few of the challenges to keeping the trails safe and enjoyable for recreation to all users. Patience is appreciated with these necessary improvement projects and maintenance.

Most erosion problems can be directly attributed to trail design and not use. Some examples of natural impacts are water, wind and gravity. Examples of user impacts could be skidding tires from bikes or maintenance vehicles due to steeper slopes or foot traffic from people and animals. Any activity which loosens or displaces the soil accelerates the erosion process.

A well designed trail follows the contour of the terrain and works with natural surroundings using several different, various trail building techniques and principles. Examples of such techniques are steepness of grade, out slope of trail tread and grade reversals which are designed into the trail to shed water, slowing the erosion process, lowering the need for maintenance.

The State Forest partners with groups like the Boy Scouts, youth camps and local clubs to help with maintenance projects.

The past few years members of the local mountain bike club, L.A.M.B.O. (Lakeland Area Mountain Bike Organization), along with other volunteers have been helping make the trails on the state forest safe and fun for all patrons.

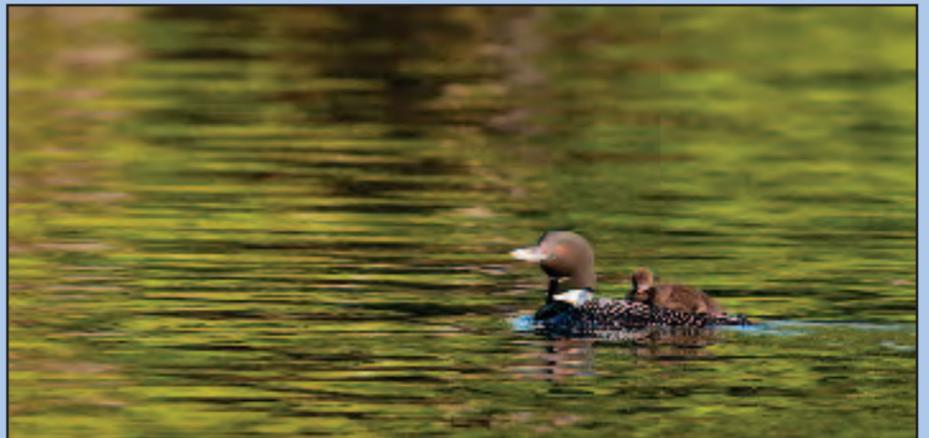
Projects include a mountain bike skills course across from the Raven trailhead on Woodruff Road, an area with various structures for riders of all skill levels.

The group is also helping to develop and build miles of sustainably built single track mountain bike trail at the Raven Trail. A portion of these trails serve as multi-use trail and are designated as snowshoe trail in the winter. Parking for the snowshoe trail is located at the Clear Lake boat landing parking lot off Hwy. J.

So if you happen to be out and about and hear some work going on. Feel free to stop by and talk, ask questions and meet some of the people who help keep our wonderful trails the best they can be!

Tony Martinez is the Trails Coordinator at the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest. He may be contacted at tony.martinez@wisconsin.gov.

Hitching a ride



Dean Baker photograph

A baby loon takes an evening ride with a parent on Carrol lake. Young loons typically don't fly until they are more than two months old.



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Canoeing, kayaking is for everyone

"Everyone must believe in something. I believe I'll go canoeing." Henry David Thoreau

Did you bring a canoe or kayak?

If so, you can really enjoy the lakes and streams of the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest. There is seemingly endless water, thanks to past glacial action which left big lakes, small lakes, potholes, rivers and streams. Canoe rental and shuttle services are available in many nearby communities.

A look at a detailed map of the northern lake country will show you possibil-

ities for short or long canoe trips. Chains of lakes, twin lakes joined by natural channels, and rivers and larger creeks offer beautiful, ever-changing views of wooded shorelines, swamps, marshes and bogs. There are many campsites along these "water trails."

Canoeing early in the morning is something you'll always remember. You'll see the sunrise, generally have placid waters, see and hear more animals (especially songbirds, ducks and loons) and you'll escape the glare, heat and wind of midday.

Evening hours are great for canoeing

too, often giving you long looks at deer, raccoons, mink and porcupines at the water's edge, or sometimes beaver, otter and muskrats in the water.

Paddling on the mirror-like lakes on a moonlit night is another delightful relaxing activity—but remember to have lights on your craft! Whenever and wherever you paddle be certain to have your life preservers with you, and please be careful!

General Paddling Information

The Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest offers canoeists the

opportunity to camp along rivers and lakes at designated canoe campsites. There are currently over 70 sites on the State Forest. The majority of sites are on the Manitowish River and Manitowish Chain of Lakes. A variety of lake sites also exist. All campsites have a picnic table and fire ring. Sites are numbered and marked with yellow signs displaying a tepee. Portages are designated by yellow signs with crossed paddles.

Accessible site

Boulder Lake just west of Boulder Junction has an accessible, barrier free campsite. There is a small boarding dock and crushed granite pathways which lead to a tent pad, picnic table, fire ring and latrine which are all wheel chair accessible.

The Northern Highland-American Legion state forest may occasionally close or remove a site due to bald eagle nesting, black bear problems or proximity to private ownership.

There are many places to explore on day trips. For quiet recreation seek out lakes with "No Motor" or "Electric Motor Only" designation.

There is no camping allowed on islands on the NH-AL State Forest. Islands possess unique characteristics and are susceptible to erosion. Day use is allowed where posted but to preserve what is there, it may be best to enjoy from a distance.

Canoe Route Trips

To help you enjoy the forest's canoe routes, we have suggested six separate trips on three different rivers in this guide. Each of the four Manitowish River trips has a combination of lakes and river stretches. Motors are allowed on the entire route. A few ways to avoid

Reflections



Dean Baker photograph

More than 70 primitive campsites can be found along canoe routes on the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest like this one along the Manitowish River.

See CANOE. . . page 22

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FABULOUS FRANK WITH PETER OPRISKO Sunday, April 13, 2pm. This time when Peter returns it will be an all Sinatra afternoon. Adults \$20, Students \$10.

CAMPANILE CHORUS SPRING CONCERT April 27, Sunday, 2pm. It must be spring if the Campanile Chorus takes to the stage for the first of our two in house concerts featuring our local talent. Suggested minimum donation of \$5.

LAKELAND COMMUNITY CONCERT BAND SPRING CONCERT May 4, Sunday, 1pm. The talent continues with the second installment of our in house concerts featuring our local musicians. Suggested minimum donation of \$5.

PIANO MEN STARRING JIM WITTER May 15, Thursday, 7pm. Jim's trio will jog your memory with the music of Billy Joel and Elton John from the '70's, enhanced with a video show and even include a medley of television theme songs. Adults \$20, Students \$10.

DANGEROUS FOLK June 4, Wednesday, 7pm. Step back in time and enjoy the music of Peter, Paul & Mary, The Kingston Trio and many more of the favorites from the 60's folk era. Adults \$20, Students \$10.

BARLEY JACKS July 8, Tuesday, 7pm. Combine bluegrass with some Texas swing, a touch of country, some Celtic and you have the makings of a great show. Adults \$20, Students \$10.

THE RED HOT CHILLI PIPERS August 20, Wednesday, 7pm. Get ready!!! This band invented the term Bagrock. Three pipers and a six piece backup band --- one of Sir Paul McCartney's favorites. They will rock the house. All tickets \$25.

THE JIMMYS September 11, Thursday, 7pm. A powerhouse eight piece band influenced by raw Chicago Blues to second line New Orleans funk. Adults \$20, Students \$10.

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NHAL Forestry Department

For more than 100 years the foresters at Trout Lake Forestry Headquarters have been involved in shaping the environment, the forest aesthetics and ecology of the northwoods. The State Forest program contributes to the economy of the area with jobs on the Forest and contract forestry work. The benefits to society are seen in the recreation throughout the lands and waters of the NHAL State Forest. We are proud to be a part of the Wisconsin State Forest system.

1911 saw the first seeds of a new forest planted at the Trout Lake nursery where the Forestry and Maintenance buildings are located today. You can see some of these pine trees today at the Star Lake Nature Trail. Currently we have 7 forester positions, several limited term employees, and supervisor to look after an active management program. For example, many pine trees are planted each spring, timber management plans developed and set up; contract for services are administered, close monitoring and suppression of small wildfires and inventory of each timber stand on the Forest is recorded every 20 years. We sell 1000s of cords of firewood permits, Christmas tree permits along with bough and bark gathering permits. It's a very busy year around organization to run. Check us out at, <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/StateForests/nhal/>

A 2013 Overview of Forest Management on the NHAL

Wisconsin DNR lands are managed for multiple-use objectives as the 2005 NHAL Master Plan specifies. Along with non-timber objectives, the DNR lands are used to demonstrate various forest practices to the public, while meeting a variety of habitat objectives. Resource managers within the Department of Natural Resources use these objectives to manage each state forest as a healthy ecosystem. Each year, about two percent of the forest of the NHAL State Forest, DNR ownership is actively managed. On the NHAL, about 4300 acres were set up for management in 2013. This included pine plantations, red oak stands, natural white pine stands, aspen and white birch stands and northern hardwood stands.

There are also many stands of forest that are designated as passive management. This means no active management takes place on these stands to provide foresters with examples of natural process effects to older forest areas. Many of these stands are great areas for the public to hike and view the Northwoods as it existed undisturbed in the past. Forest managers also leave patches and individual trees that are legacies of the past forest in active management zones. These trees serve as seed sources and habitat that is rare in most of Wisconsin's landscape.

Of the area in active harvest more than 70 percent of the management prescriptions are selective, which reduce the density of stems to accelerate growth of the remaining trees and vertical structural diversity within the stand harvested. Approximately 30 percent of the stands actively managed each year are harvested using regeneration techniques. After harvest these forests are either replanted or regenerate naturally and will continue to grow and produce forests habitats and wood products for future generations. Regenerating forests also provide important habitat for species associated with young forests such as ruffed grouse, snowshoe hare and woodcock.

Harvested stands are either regenerated naturally or are planted with



seedlings. The determination of which method to use is based on the ability of the site to regenerate naturally and the ability of the desired species to regenerate on a particular site. For example, if a site experiences hot and dry conditions planting may be the best alternative. This is most common for the pine species, especially jack pine.

Even-aged and uneven-aged management schemes are the harvest systems employed on Wisconsin DNR's land. Even-aged management includes clearcuts with reserves, seed tree methods, shelterwood cuttings, and intermediate thinnings. Uneven-aged management includes both individual and group selection techniques. Each of these systems and techniques are designed in conjunction with a particular tree species or community of trees. For example, uneven-aged single tree and group selection techniques are used in northern hardwoods, hemlock-hardwood, and swamp hardwood stands. In contrast, even-aged clearcuts are used in pine (red, white, and jack), paper birch, aspen, oak, northern hardwoods, scrub oak, aspen, fir-spruce, and black spruce stands. The selection of a management system and specific technique depends on many factors, including tree composition, age of the stand, location, accessibility, and most importantly the long-term objectives for the stand under consideration.

Adapted from DNR Forestry Website

Better Communication with Public Input

Forest certification standards emphasize a high level of communication with stakeholders (the public). To help assure open communication of annual work plans, each state forest is making those plans – including timber harvest and recreation development work – available to the public. The NHAL website has all our plans and timber sale areas posted. Annual public meetings are held to welcome public comments on annual work plans or any new major activities or projects. Certification Audit findings show the DNR's efforts to involve and inform the public regarding management programs through use of the web, mailings, public meetings and newspapers clearly exceed the standard.

Strong Cooperation

NHAL develops its programs to promote the conservation of native biological diversity, including species, wildlife habitats and ecological or natural community types, at stand and landscape levels. Strong cooperation among the Division of Forestry and the Bureaus of Endangered Resources and Wildlife Management has led to an exceptional program for the conservation of native biological diversity. The program clearly exceeds the standard in protections afforded rare, threatened or endangered species or communities.

It all comes down to a healthy State Forest that is managed well and is certified to prove it meets strict National and International standards. Please enjoy your visit to our Forest. We are very proud of it!

Forest Certification of the NHAL Confirms a "Green Forest"

After Governor Jim Doyle issued an October 2003 directive calling for exploration of certification for the state forestry program, the Department of Natural Resources quickly responded by obtaining dual Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) recognition of Wisconsin's 510,000-acre state forest system by May of 2004. The Wisconsin State Forests have been certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standard, 2005-2009 Edition (SFIS) since May 5, 2004. State Forest certification has now been renewed for another 5 year term. The scope of the Wisconsin SFI Program recertification encompasses programs for management of several categories of state lands beyond state forests, including state parks, wildlife lands and other categories of generally forested lands. DNR land included in the total certification project includes approximately 1.5 million acres in Wisconsin.

Independent, third-party forest certification means management of Wisconsin's state forests meets strict standards for ecological, social and economic sustainability. Wisconsin's state forests are certified to conform to FSC standards, an international approach, as well as SFI standards which are designed primarily for North American forests.

There are nine principals of sustainable forestry, which are described in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard as:

1. Sustainable Forestry

To practice sustainable forestry in the present without compromising the ability of future generations needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates reforestation and the managing, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products through the conservation of soil, air and water quality, biological diversity, wildlife and

aquatic habitat, recreation, and aesthetics.

2. Responsible Practices

To use and to promote sustainable forestry practices among forest landowners that are both scientifically credible and economically, environmentally, and socially responsible.

3. Reforestation and Productive Capacity

To provide and monitor regeneration after harvest and to maintain the productive capacity of the forestland base.

4. Forest Health and Productivity

To protect forests from economically or environmentally undesirable wildfire, pests, diseases, and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve long-term forest health and productivity.

5. Long-Term Forest and Soil Productivity

To protect and maintain long-term forest and soil productivity with certified practices applied to all harvest areas. The latest science and continuous improvement is applied.

6. Protection of Water Resources

To protect open water bodies and adjacent vegetative areas from erosion.

7. Protection of Special Sites and Biological Diversity

To manage forests and lands of special significance (biologically, geologically, historically or culturally important) in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities and to promote a diversity of wildlife habitats, forest types, and natural community types.

8. Legal Compliance

To comply with all applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

9. Continual Improvement

To continually improve the practice of forest management through training and monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to sustainable forestry.

Bittersweet Wild Lakes area

The 2,553 acre Bittersweet Wild Lakes Area lies a few miles north and east of the town of Woodruff off State Highway 70. Its wild seepage lakes (Bittersweet, Prong, Oberlin, and Smith) are small, scenic, undeveloped

and connected by portage trails. The forest surrounding these lakes captures the oldest stands of hemlock, red pine and white pine known on the Northern Highland-American Legion. Already a State Natural Area, the Bittersweet



Wild Lakes Area has now been set aside to preserve the beautiful woods and waters for visitors to enjoy in a quiet, remote setting. All five primitive campsites are reservable for up to 14 nights through Reserve America (888-947-2757) or on a first-come, first-served basis. Motors are not allowed on any of these lakes and access is by carry-in landings. Campers must register at the Clear Lake Ranger Station.

Collecting firewood for your campfire

Registered campers on the state forest do not need a permit to cut campfire wood for use at their campsite, but the rules are the same



Frequently asked questions about wood cutting permits

Q: Who is required to have a wood cutting permit?

A: Every household cutting firewood on the state forest for home use is required to have a wood cutting permit. Members of the permit holder's family or friends may assist the permit holder without a permit. Any person having their wood permit revoked may not cut wood or assist others until the term of their revocation is over.

Registered campers on the state forest do not need a permit to cut campfire wood for use at their campsite.

Q: What trees can I cut?

A: Only slash from logging or dead standing or downed wood may be harvested. Standing dead trees are defined as trees with bark coming off the trunk, loss of fine branches, or trees without leaves during leaf out. Do not cut trees

with buds on them. If in doubt, DO NOT CUT.

Q: Where can I go to cut firewood?

A: Most areas of the state forest are open for wood harvesting. On timber sales, you may not cut trees with marking paint on them, you may not cut wood from logging piles (even if they look old) or any forest products left in the woods by loggers. You may not cut any wood in timber sale areas if logging equipment is present.

Campgrounds and picnic areas are closed for wood harvesting except from Nov. 1st through April 30th when you may harvest **downed** wood from these areas. At no time may standing trees be cut in campgrounds or picnic areas.

Areas within 100' of any shoreline are closed to wood harvesting. This preserves shoreline aesthetics and helps prevent erosion.

You may not cut wood in any area

signed "closed to wood harvesting."

Q: Can I sell the firewood that I cut on the state forest?

A: No. A wood cutting permit is for personal use only.

Q: What equipment can I use to cut firewood?

A: No motorized equipment other than chainsaws may be used to harvest wood. Licensed motor vehicles are only allowed on woods roads that are not bermed or gated. All off-road use of vehicles including ATV's, tractors, skid steers, and snowmobiles for hauling or skidding is strictly prohibited.

Q: What will happen if I violate the conditions of the permit?

A: Violations of the permit conditions will result in prosecution and revocation of the wood cutting permit. The minimum fine for violating the wood permit conditions is \$389.50 plus restitution.

CANOE

From page 20

motor boat traffic is to plan a trip in spring or fall or paddle in the early morning hours during summer. Most of the campsites are isolated from development but if you are seeking a more Wilderness type experience a few places to try would be the Sylvania Wilderness Area or the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. Along the way you will paddle past black spruce bogs, view giant white pines along the shore and wind through a river of lily pads and submersed tree stumps. Fishing regulations can be different on each body of water so be sure to stop at the boat landings where regulations are posted.

The Manitowish River flows 44 miles from High Lake to the Flambeau Flowage. There are three portages on the slow flowing river. Beginners as well as the avid canoeist can enjoy the scenic beauty of the Manitowish River. Trips 1-4 describe four continuous sections of the Manitowish River. Trip 5 is along the Trout River and Trip 6 is along the Wisconsin River.

Trip 1: High Lake to Fishtrap Dam

Put-in at the High Lake boat landing on the south side of Hwy B. The small creek leads to High Lake. Travel southwest through a culvert into Fishtrap Lake. Once through Fishtrap, the river meanders past Johnson and Nixon tributary creeks. Take out at the boat landing just upstream from the Fishtrap Dam. The 7.5 mile segment could be a day trip or an overnight trip. Total paddling time is 4 hours.

Trip 2: Fishtrap Dam to Highway K

Take Hwy M north of Boulder Junction and turn on High-Fishtrap Road. Stay to the right which is Dam Road. Put in below the dam that is downstream from the boat landing. The take-out is 6.1 miles at the boat landing just upstream from Hwy K. Paddling time is 3 hours. This could be a day or overnight trip.

Trip 3: Highway K to Highway 51

Put-in for this segment is just below the rapids on Hwy K. This segment is 15.5 miles and 8 hours of paddling. Allow several days for this trip. A short portage for the ten foot dam at Rest Lake and Hwy W is required. Take out where the Manitowish River and Hwy 51 inter-

sect. For a shorter trip (4 hrs.) take out at the Island Lake boat landing.

Trip 4: Highway 51 to Murray's Landing

The last segment begins below the Hwy 51 bridge and runs 17 miles. A USGS topographic map is recommended for this trip as the river flows into the Flambeau Flowage, but not directly to Murray's Landing. Allow at least an overnight stay for this trip. Paddling time is 12 hours. Taking out at the Hwy 51 Wayside or the Hwy 47 bridge can shorten this segment. Once past the Hwy 47 bridge there is no take out until Murray's Landing. Allow 4? hours paddling time for the Hwy 47 to Murray's Landing segment.

Trip 5: White Sand to Trout River Trip

This trip begins at White Sand Lake north of Hwy K. Travel south across a portage from White Sand to Lost Canoe. From Lost Canoe, portage into Palette. Palette Lake has three portages. The portage to Stevenson Springs keeps you on the route to Trout Lake. The portage to Escanaba can be a side trip. Escanaba Lake is 100% state owned and a beautiful place to paddle. Be aware that Escanaba and Palette are research lakes and no fishing is allowed without a permit. Staying on the route and portaging to Stevenson springs will bring you to a sand road. Pull over this road to a small creek which flows to the North Trout Campground and boat landing. Beaver dams will be located along this stretch. The White Sand to North Trout Campground section of this route can be used as a day or overnight trip. From South Trout Lake, take the Trout River which passes through Wild Rice, Alder, and Manitowish Lakes. Paddling north of Manitowish Lake and under the highway 51 bridge into Spider allows you to connect with the Manitowish River Trip. There are a total of three portages on this route. The total distance is 19 miles but can be divided into smaller routes.

Trip 6: Wisconsin River Trip, Cloverland Dr. to Bridge Rd

The put-in for this trip is just below the Cloverland Dam off Cloverland Road west of Eagle River south of Highway 70. There are three sites along twenty miles of River. Each site is separated by fairly long stretches of river. The first site is on the south shore of the river just east of a wide shallow open water area. The next site is downstream of the Rainbow Reservoir just below



Dean Baker photograph

Scenes like this are abundant on the NHAL.

Rainbow Rapids. The third and southernmost site is just downstream of the confluence of the Horsehead creek. The river is approximately 100 feet wide here with sweeping current. Take out is at Bridge Road near McNaughton.

Motors are allowed on this stretch but will most likely be concentrated on the Rainbow Flowage. A Rainbow Flowage map and a good topographical map are suggested for this route.

This could be a two or three day trip. In low water you may bump rocks and high water will make the fast water more challenging. This trip is more suited to intermediate paddlers.

Rules and Regulations

- Camping is permitted only at designated sites.
- Do not cut or damage living trees or shrubs.
- No more than six persons on a site.
- No fee is required.
- Access must be by watercraft.
- Camping is limited to one night only.
- Sites are available on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Safety Messages

Canoeing

Every canoe must carry a U. S. Coast Guard approved wearable lifesaving device for each person aboard. Passengers should wear a life jacket at all times. Most forest water trails are slow to moderately slow, but the canoeist should be

aware of any changing conditions. As a rule, do not overload your watercraft.

Swimming

Swim safely. Don't swim alone, at night, or in unfamiliar places. Use caution when wading as water depths may change abruptly. Watch small children closely near the water.

Campfires

Use caution and confine fires to a fire ring. Put the fire out if wind changes cause concern. Watch children closely near the fire. Once you have put a match to the fire don't use charcoal starter or any other flammable material. Make sure the fire is completely out and the grill or fire ring is cool before you leave the area.

Drinking Water

Boil all water, use approved tablets or filters before drinking.

Plants

Never eat berries or plant materials unless you are certain of their identity.

Helpful Hints

Keep soap usage at least 100 feet from shore where ground can filter out impurities. Always carry a compass, insect repellent and a first aid kit. Pack out non-combustibles and please leave a clean site for others. Beaver dams may be encountered along the way, so wear shoes appropriate for dragging a canoe over the dams.

NHAL provides clean water



station, and the Trout Lake office are tested quarterly. By testing this aggressively, we can be certain that water from every well is safe to drink. These samples are done in order to test for bacteria contamination, but we also test each well annually for nitrates.

Now let's follow a raindrop in northern Wisconsin as it travels from the sky through the atmosphere and earth to the aquifer.

First of all, when we have a rain event, only a portion of the rain actually seeps down into the aquifer. Most of it runs off into wetlands, lakes, and rivers. When a drop of rain starts its journey from the clouds toward the aquifer, it travels downward through the atmosphere and top soil. It is at these points in its journey that it sometimes will pick up impurities. Once it is beneath the top soil and enters mineral soil, the soil itself actually filters any impurities out of the water. Because the air above and soil beneath the NHAL have very few impurities by the time that raindrop reaches the aquifer, it becomes part of a water supply that is among the cleanest on earth.

There is, however, another part of this story. As that same raindrop is traveling through the soil on its way to the aquifer, it is not only filtering out impurities, but can also pick up minerals. One of most abundant minerals in the earth's surface is iron. That being the case, some of our wells on the NHAL have varying degrees of iron in the water. There is a sort of "love/hate" relationship with iron. Iron is essential mineral for all people. The "dark" side of iron is the staining that it leaves on containers, etc. Iron can also affect the taste of water. The bottom line on iron is it can discolor the water and



change the taste. It has no negative health effects, and water from these wells is almost certainly safer to drink than bottled water.

There are a number of ways that the Wisconsin DNR works to monitor and maintain the high quality of the water in northern Wisconsin. The NHAL staff, Wisconsin DNR Drinking Water Section and the State Lab of Hygiene, work together to continuously monitor the drinking water at every well on the forest. There is an air monitoring station at Trout Lake which continuously monitors air quality. By the way, this information is used as a base line for Wisconsin since it is the cleanest air in the state.

And then there is forestry. Now you may be asking yourself – what can forestry management possibly have to do with clean drinking water? Well, (sorry about that), I'll tell you. Forestry practice on the NHAL is certified by both the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative to be managed in a sustainable manner. Part of the certification process looks at the impact logging has to the surrounding lakes, rivers, wetlands and soil.

Do you remember earlier when I talked about the raindrop traveling

through the soil on its way to the aquifer? If that raindrop has to travel through contaminated air or soil on its way to the aquifer, the possibility of polluting the water we drink is increased. That is part of the reason sustainable forestry management and forest certification becomes so important on the NHAL.

The bottom line is that you can be rest assured any water you drink from any well located on the NHAL is going to be safe to drink. In fact, it is very likely safer and cleaner than bottled water. Plus it has the added benefit of folks not needing to carry the plastic disposable bottles, (which is a topic for another article), and is available almost anywhere you are camping, picnicking or hiking on the forest.

So, on your next visit to the NHAL, instead of stocking up on bottled water, just bring a reusable water container, or you can pick one up with the NHAL logo at the "Discovery Depot" inside the Crystal Lake Ranger Station, and enjoy some of our outstanding water!

Dick Logan is the Facilities Maintenance Specialist on the NHAL and is the driving force behind many of the sustainability initiatives there. Dick lives off-grid in the Winchester area.

Safety first on the NHAL

The safety of forest visitors is a priority so please be careful at all times and please impress safety precautions on your children. Following are some precautions to keep in mind.

Swimming—Swim safely. Swim at a designated beach where available. None of the Forest beaches have lifeguards.

Don't swim alone, at night, or in unfamiliar places. Use caution when wading in unknown waters, as water depth may change abruptly. Watch small children closely near the water.

Boating/Canoeing—Every boat and canoe must carry a Coast Guard approved lifesaving device for each person aboard, and passengers should wear lifejackets at all times. Don't overload your craft. When boating, be aware of your wake and stay well away from swimmers. Please do not power load boats. If you coast on and trim up – this will help keep the lake bottom in place.

Hiking—Hike safely. Be aware that trails vary in difficulty. Not all trails are surfaced. There may be steep climbs or descents or stairways. Watch small children closely. Trail surfaces can become slippery when wet or covered by leaves or pine needles, or where there is loose gravel.

Biking—For your protection, wear shoes, pant-leg clips and helmet when bicycling. Wear reflective clothing for

bicycling at night. Keep your bike under full control at all times. Pull off the road or trail to view wildlife, flowers or scenic views. Be cautious in areas with loose gravel or sand, wet leaves, or other loose material. Always be alert to traffic. Park and forest roads follow the terrain and often have steep grades, corners and intersections. Burrowing animals may leave bumps and holes in the trail. Bikes are not allowed on developed nature or hiking trails.

Skiing—Be aware that groomed trails

cannot always be groomed on a daily basis. The quality of groomed trails can vary depending on heavy use, weather and terrain. Skiers should not ski beyond their abilities or allow speed to build up beyond the skier's ability to control their descent.

Plants—Never eat berries or plant parts unless you are certain of their identity.

Severe weather—The time to prepare for severe weather is before the storm hits. Please develop a plan with your family on what you will do if threatening

weather approaches.

Questions to consider

- What county and city are you visiting?
- Where will you go if threatening weather is approaching?
- How will you find out if a storm is moving toward your area?
- How will you receive warnings and forecasts before the storm strikes? A brochure on Severe Weather Information from the National Weather Service is available at the ranger stations.



Carry in – carry out

Welcome to your state forest! You'll notice at the picnic areas, shelters, beaches, and other day use areas that there are no garbage or recycling bins.

When you visit many Wisconsin state forests, parks and recreation areas, you need to take your garbage and recyclables home with you.



Why?

Home away from home: The forests belong to all of us, and just like home, we need to care for them and keep them clean.

Less mess: Removal of the garbage and recycling containers eliminates the

smells and mess they create. It also cuts down on yellow jackets and other pests.

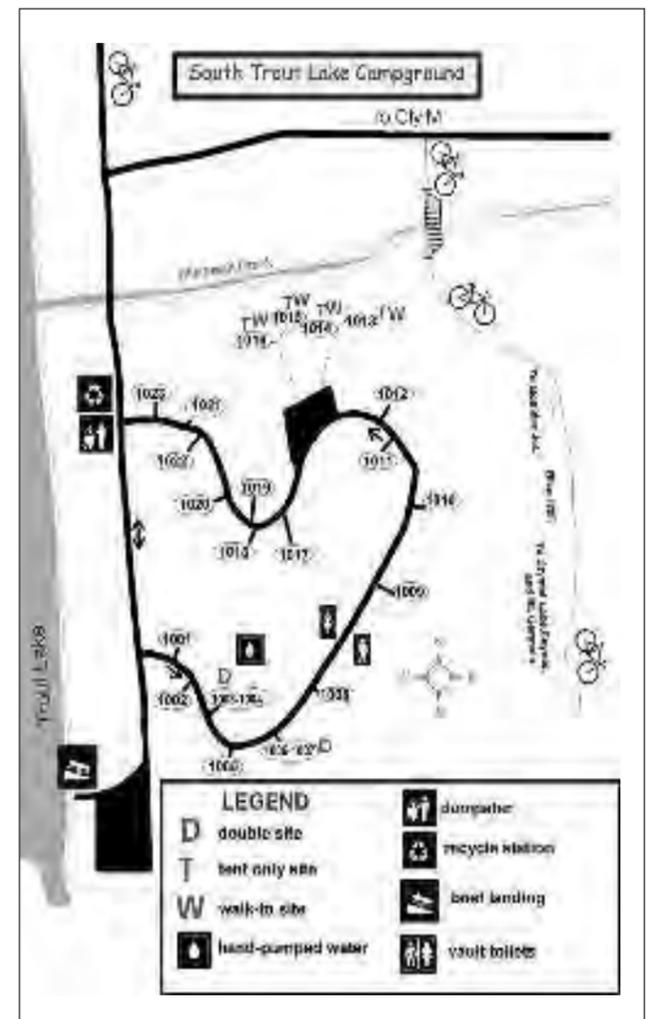
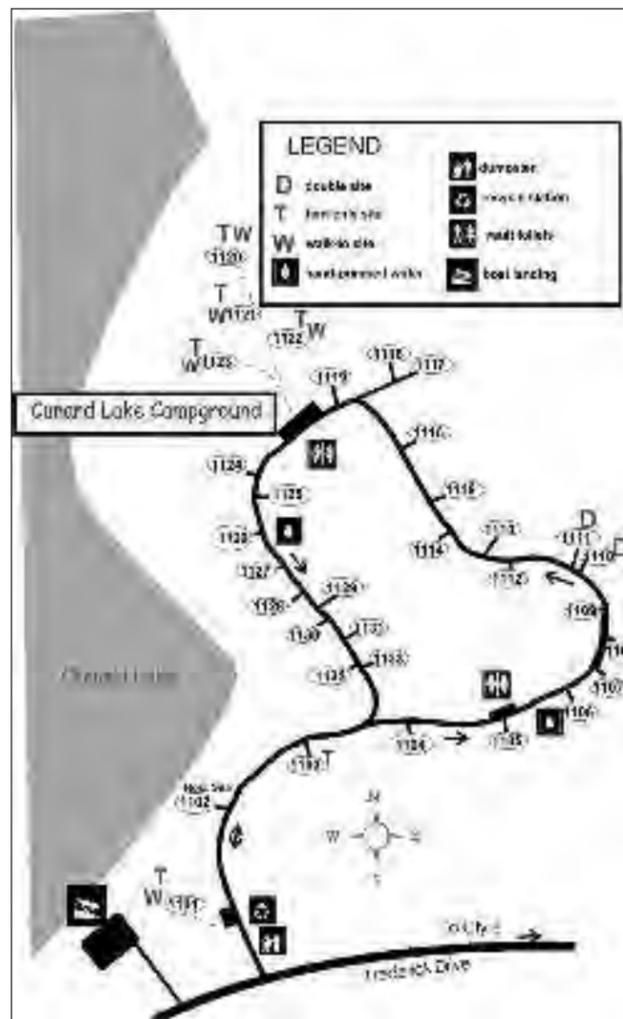
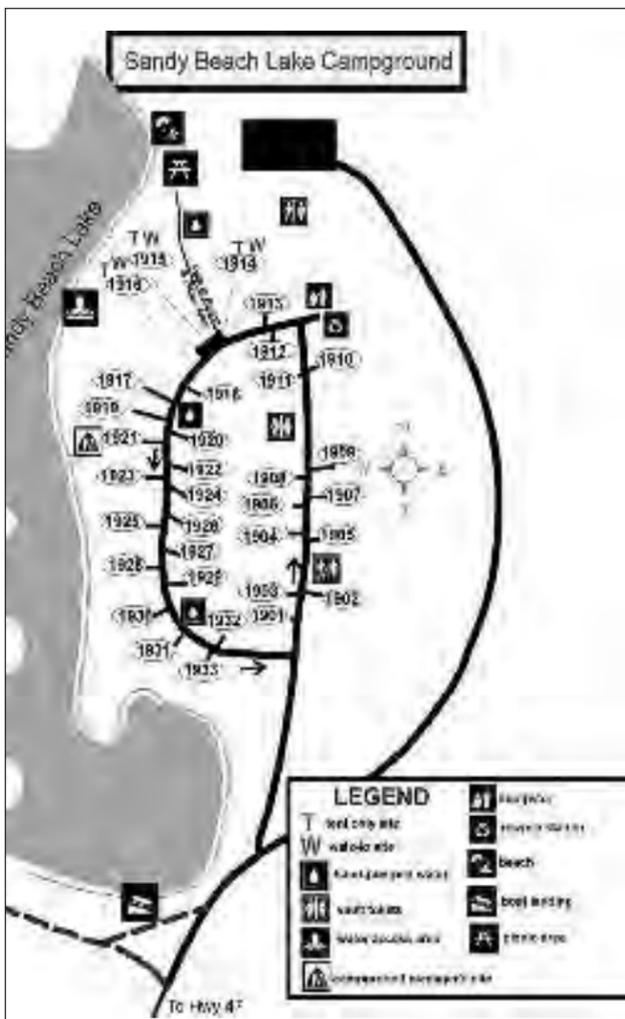
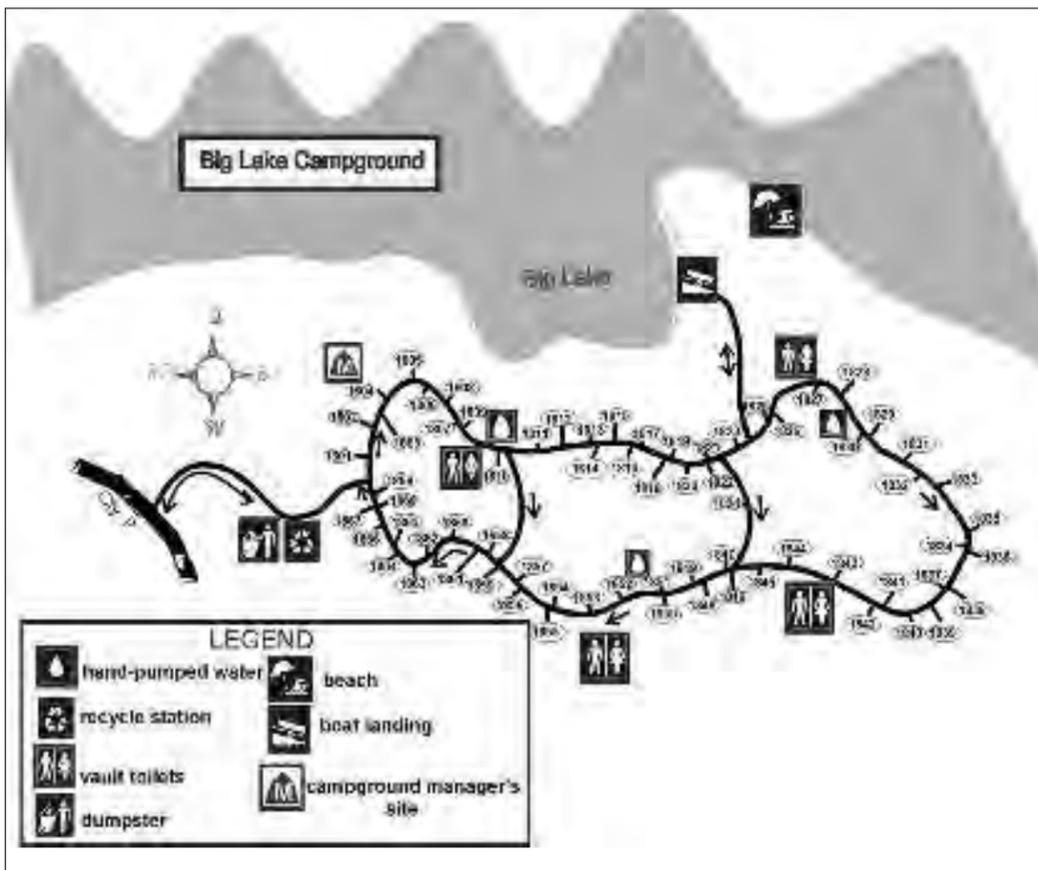
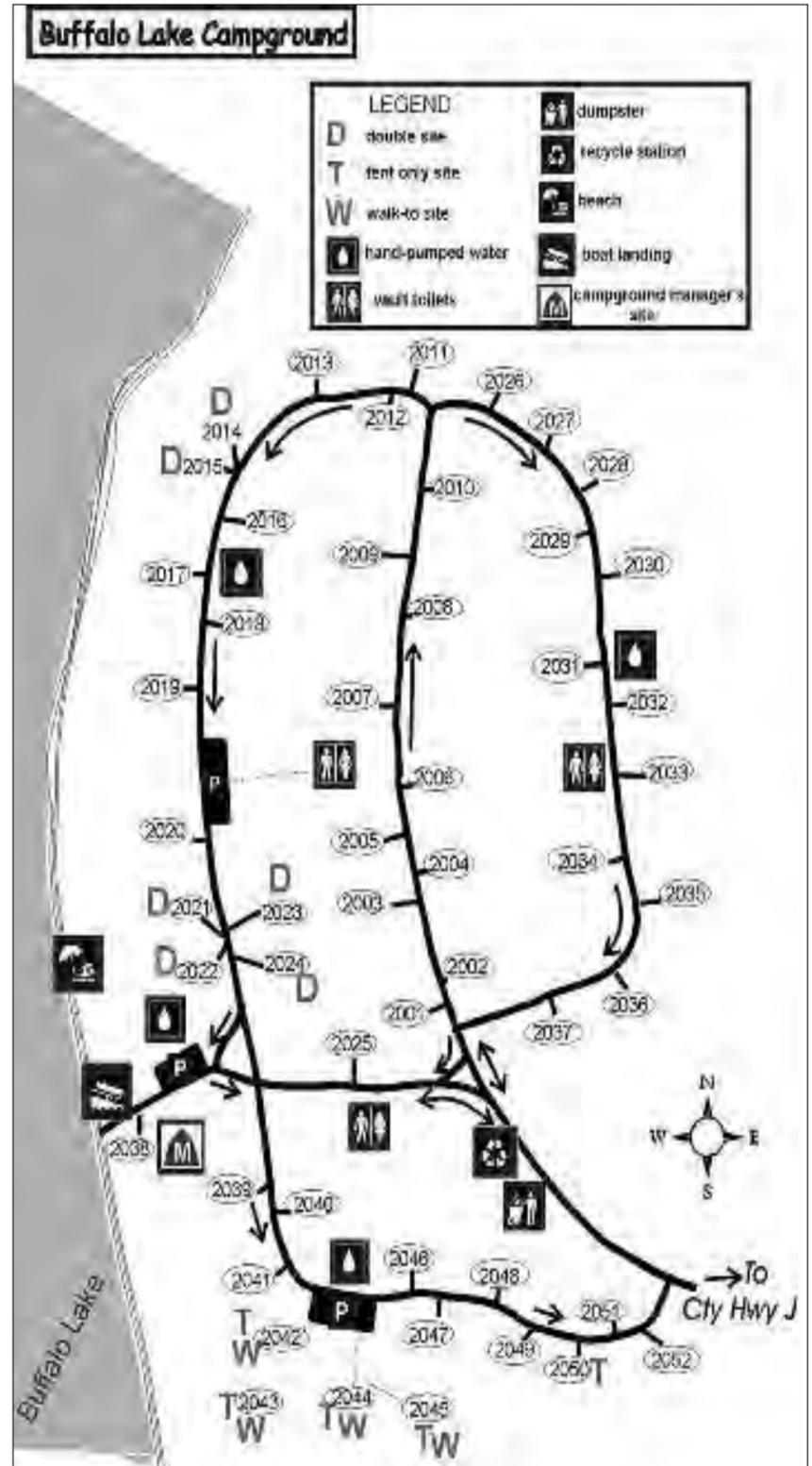
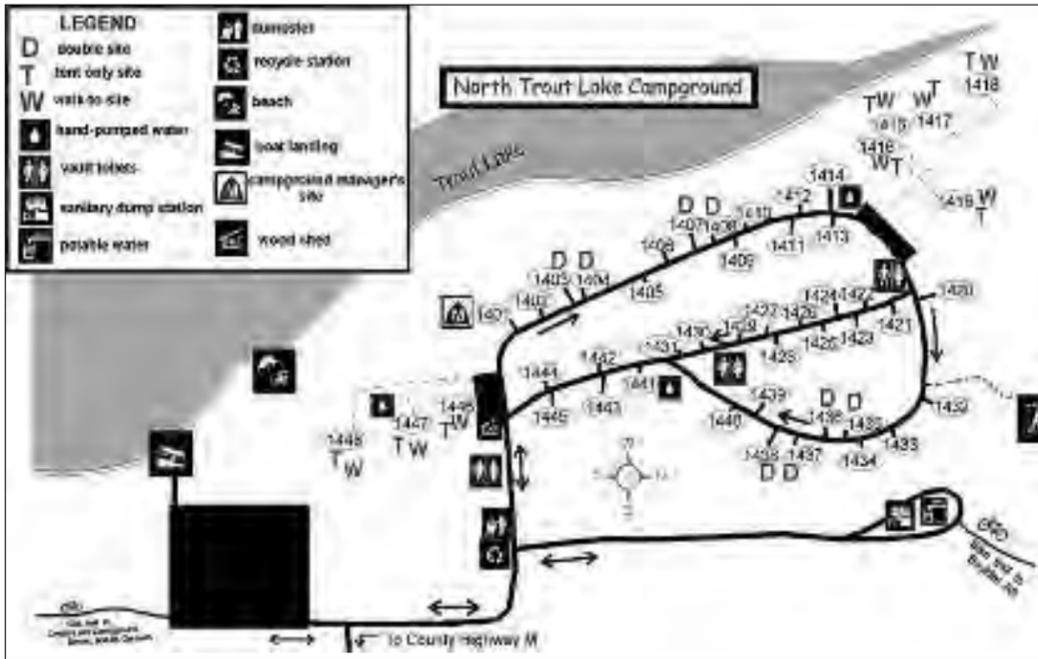
Reduce, reuse, recycle: Wisconsin state law requires us to recycle many materials we once threw away. Better yet, we can make new choices of what to bring with use. The more reusable things we pack, the less garbage we'll create.

It's good for us and for our earth home.

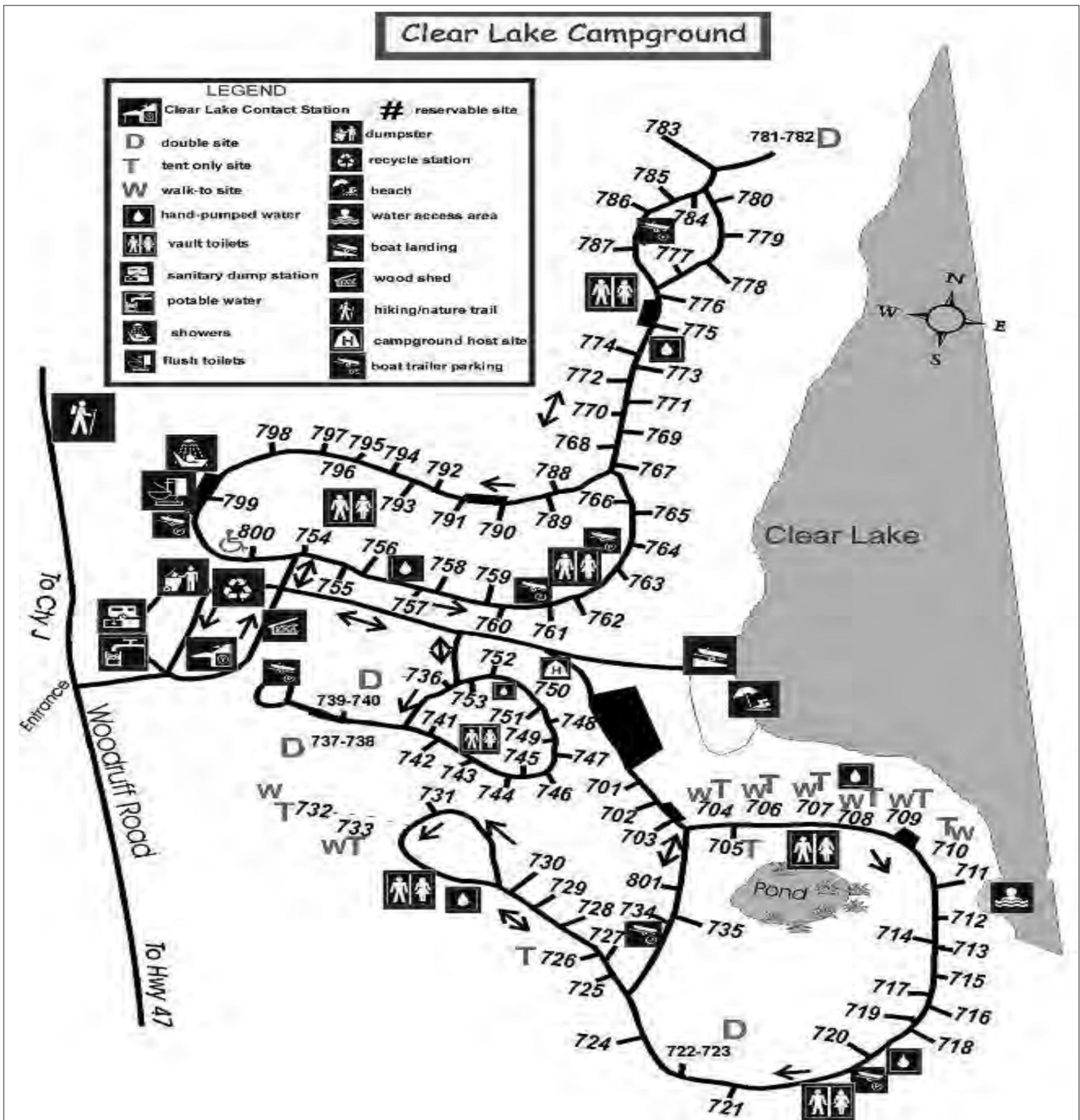
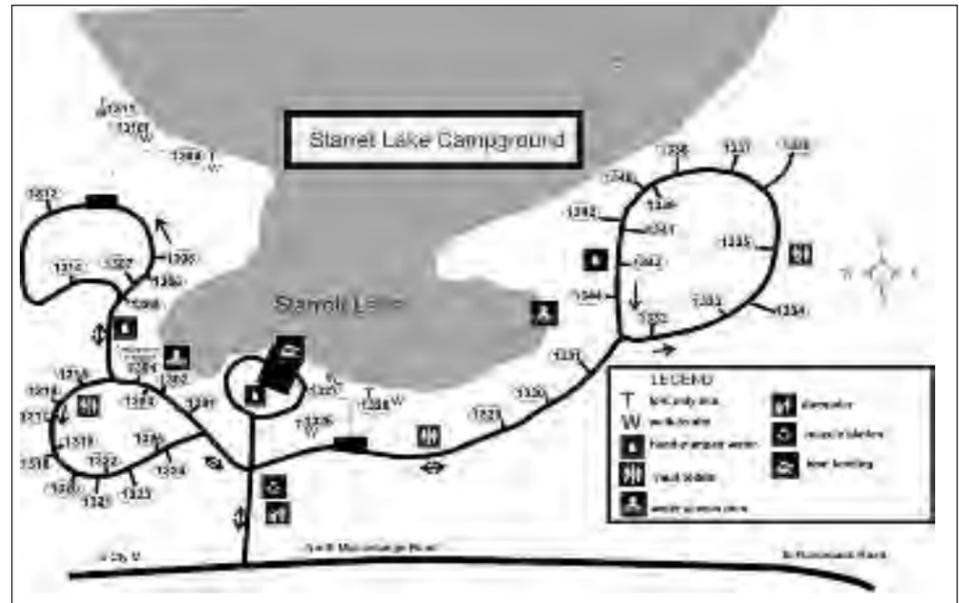
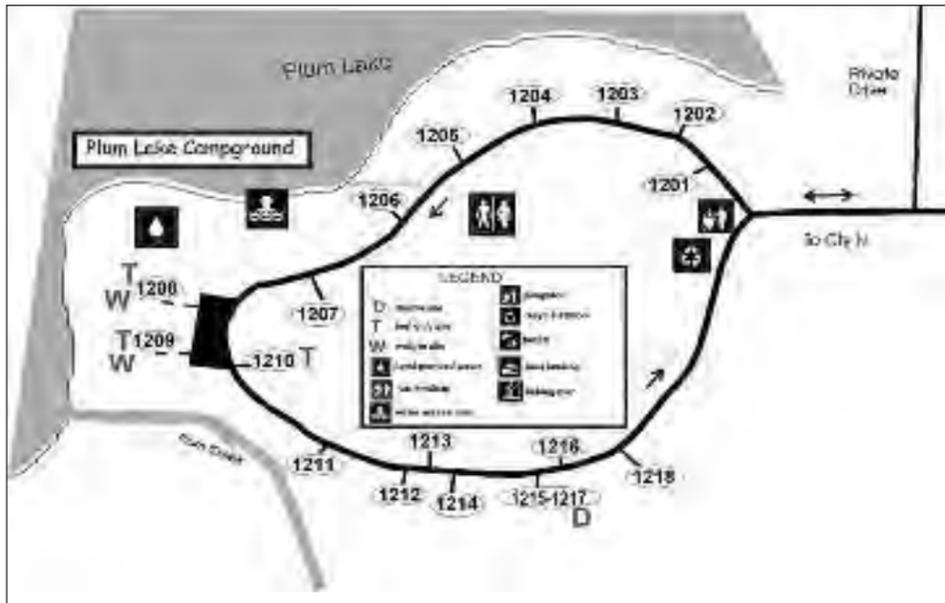
Thanks for helping out by carrying out what you've carried in.

Carry in – carry out.

Campground Maps



Campground Maps



Camping in bear country

- Always keep a clean camp.
- Use a designated camping area.
- Don't leave food out when not in use.
- Store it in bear-resistant storage unit, hard shell vehicle or car trunk.
- Set up tents with space between them.
- Keep pets on a leash.
- Keep your sleeping area, tent and sleeping bag free of food and odors.
- Don't sleep in clothes you were wearing while you cooked food.
- Keep a flashlight readily available.
- Don't leave dirty utensils around the campsite
- Before going to bed, place garbage in dumpsters provided by the campground.

Stay far away from bear traps
 Although it's tempting to check out the bear traps we have set out to catch our nuisance bears, our attempts to capture will be much more successful if everyone steers clear of the traps. Please don't add to Law Enforcement Ranger duties by forcing us to monitor traps for people as well as bears.

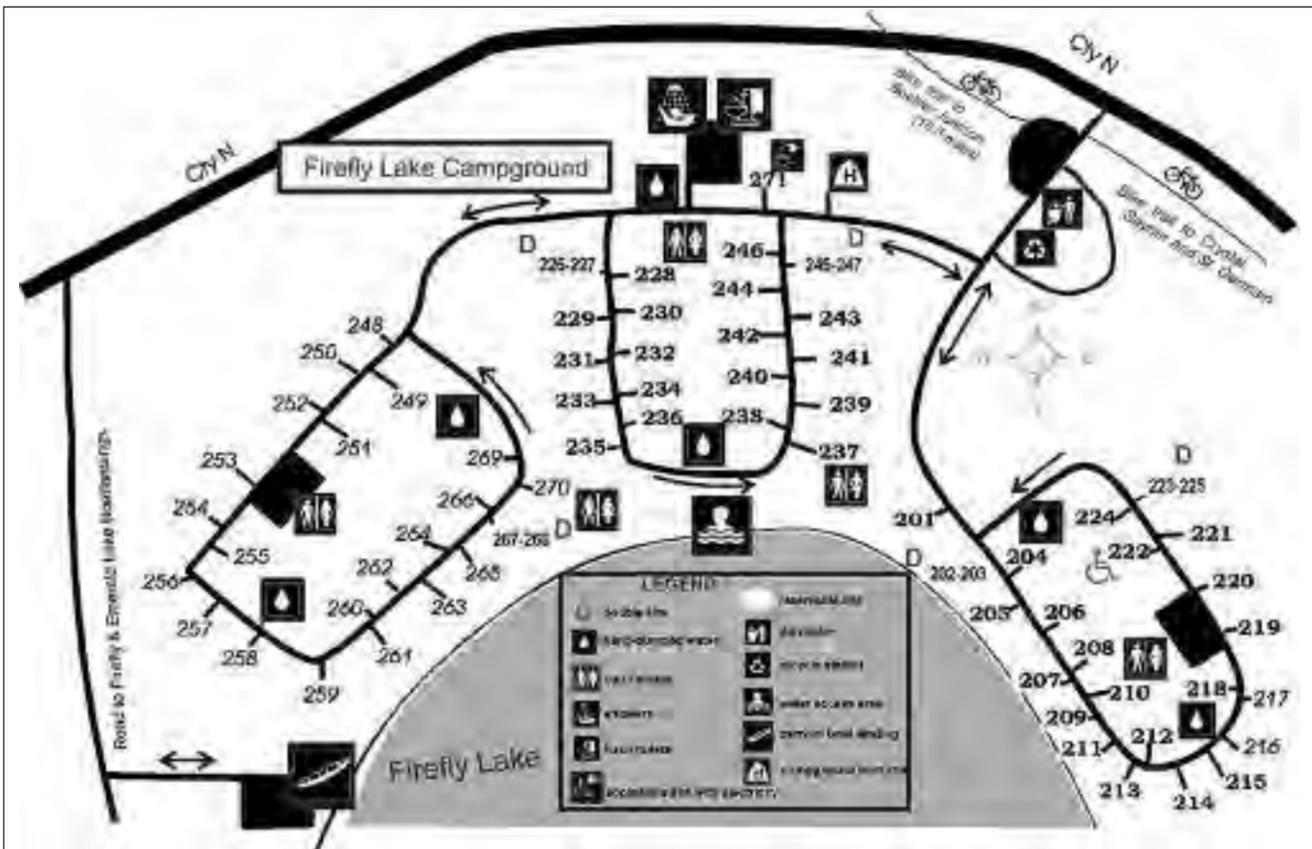
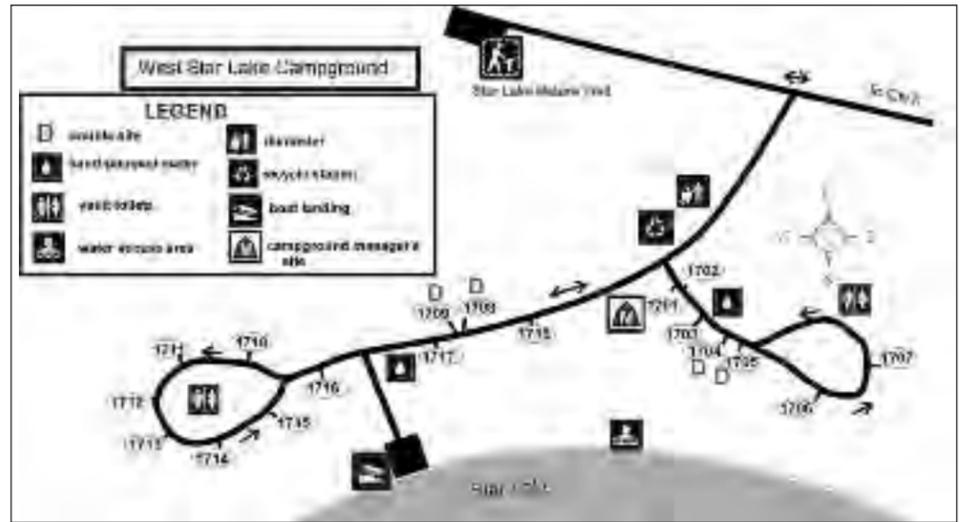
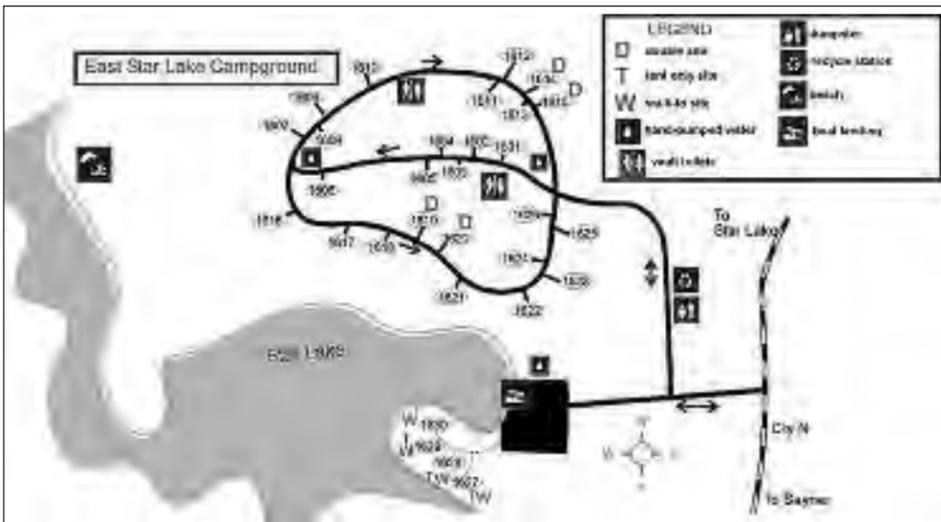
Frightening black bears
 Black bears are occasionally encountered on trails or at campsites. In most cases bears can be frightened away, but be sure they have an obvious and large escape route. Use sticks, rocks, frying pans, or whatever is available to frighten the animal away. They can usually be frightened away

by shouting, clapping hands, or throwing objects. Such actions can be augmented by the noise of pots banging.
 It is important to attempt to determine the motivation of the offending bears. Habituated, food-conditioned bears can be very dangerous. Aggressive behavior toward a black bear should not be carried so far as to threaten the bear and elicit an attack.

Black bear encounters
 Black bears should always be considered unpredictable and potentially dangerous. A black bear will usually detect your presence and flee the area before you notice unless the bear has been conditioned

to people and their foods.
 If a black bear is visible, but not close, alter your route so that you will move away from its area.
 If a black bear approaches, do not run. Remain calm, continue facing the bear and slowly back away. If the bear continues to approach, try to group together and pick up small children. Try to scare the bear away by shouting and acting aggressively.
 If a black bear attacks, it is suggested to fight back using everything in your power, fists, sticks, rocks, and E.P.A. registered bear pepper spray. To this date, there is no recorded report of a black bear attacking a human on the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest.

Campground Maps

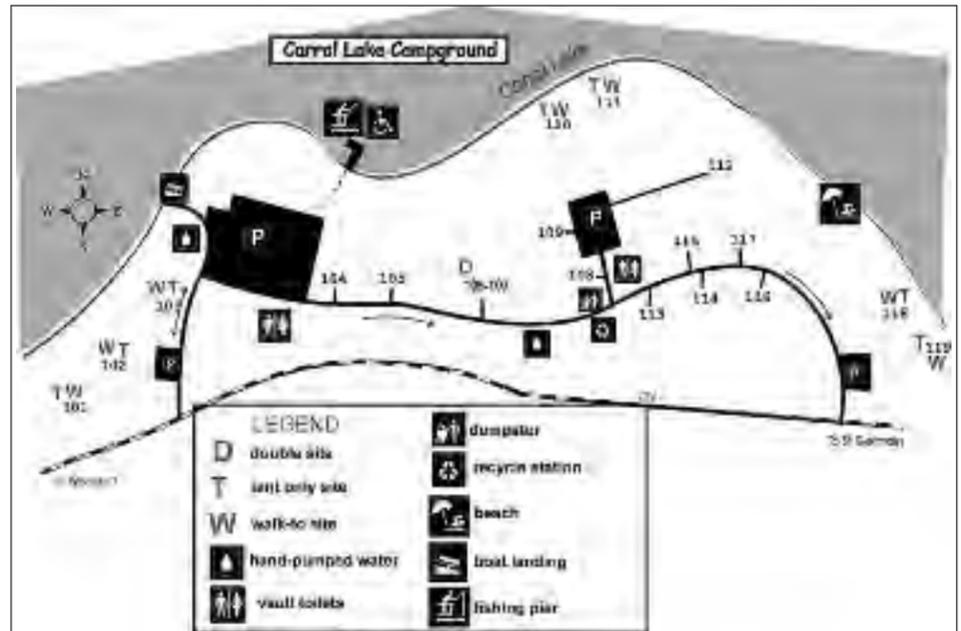
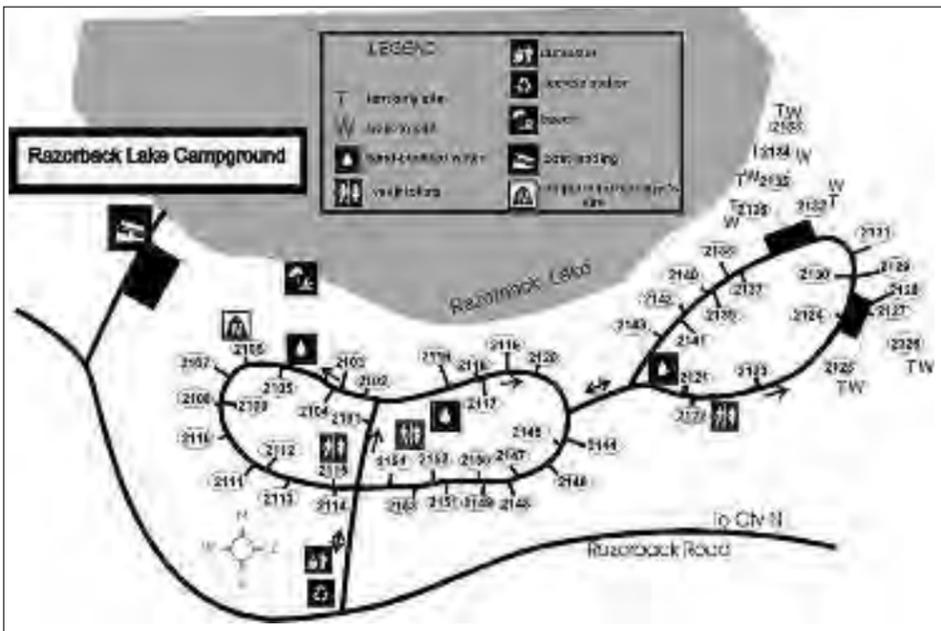


"Remember... Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!"
 Safe Campfire: Safety used for cooking and warming. Only clean wood is allowed!
 Unsafe Campfire: Used for disposing of garbage as well. Only aluminum, plastic, rubber, aluminum, treated paper or cardboard is not allowed!

Campfire Safety

If a fire is desired and conditions are favorable, use the following tips:

1. Keep tents and gear at least 10 feet away from the fire.
2. Never leave your campfire unattended and always have a shovel and bucket of water on site.
3. When finished, douse your campfire thoroughly with water and stir the ashes.
4. Scrape all embers off of the partially burned sticks and logs.
5. Check the entire area outside the campfire circle for any hot embers. Remember that it only takes one spark or ember to start a forest fire!
6. Add more water to your fire and stir again and it's cool.



Kids in the outdoors

Look for

In this big picture, find...

- acorn 
- butterfly 
- rabbit head 
- mushroom 
- ant 
- feather 
- dragonfly 
- raspberry 



GO ON A TREE HUNT

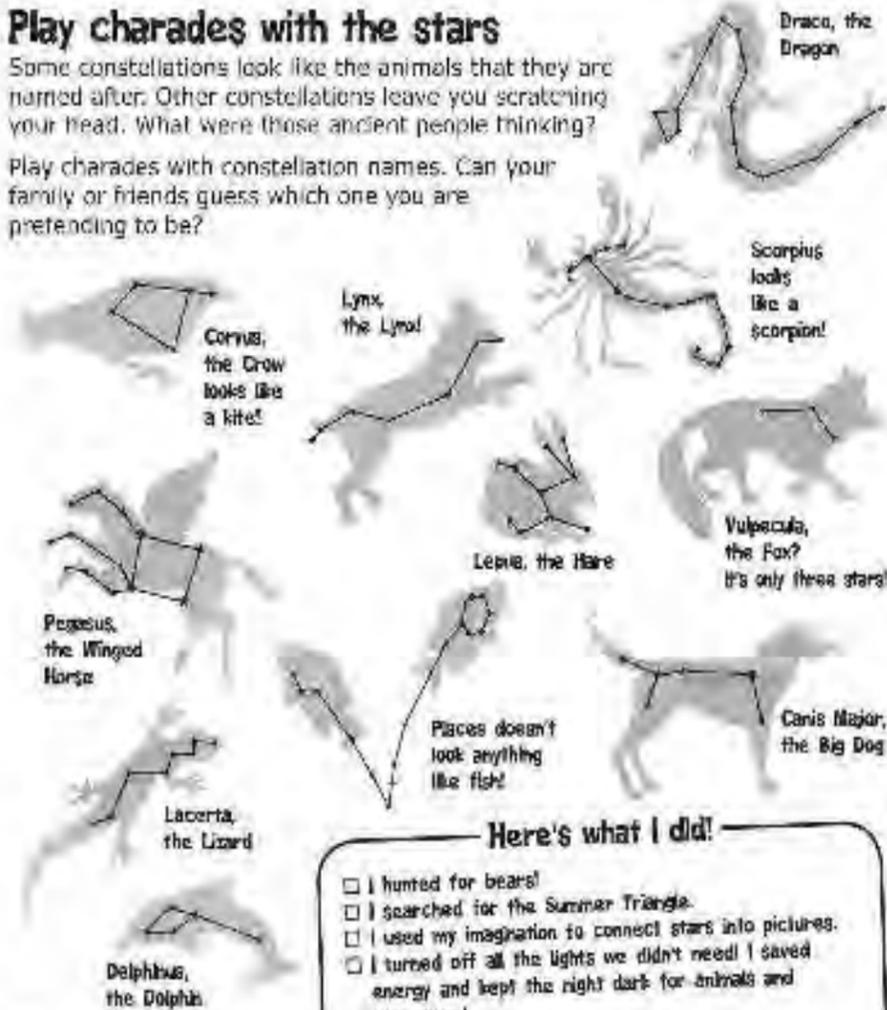
Trees have amazing stories to tell. As you explore forests, campgrounds and swamps, look for the tree mysteries on this page. Check them off as you find them. Can you find four in a row, four in a column, all four corners, or all of them?

<input type="checkbox"/> beaver sign Can you see the tracks left by the beaver's large teeth?	<input type="checkbox"/> wolf tree Look for a large tree with wide-spreading branches that only grow in the open by the bank.	<input type="checkbox"/> snag Dead trees are important forest for wildlife. How do you think you tree died?	<input type="checkbox"/> direction tree Find a tree with most branches on the north side of the tree.
<input type="checkbox"/> stump Can you tell when and why the tree was cut down? How old was it when it was cut? Count the rings.	<input type="checkbox"/> frost crack Look for a long thin hole. These cuts spread with freezing and thawing.	<input type="checkbox"/> trees in rows Trees don't usually grow in straight rows by themselves. Did someone plant the trees you found?	<input type="checkbox"/> butt Butts are straight trunks and stumps on trees that are probably caused by insects from adjacent disease-infested trunks. But only grow widely in all directions like a carpet.
<input type="checkbox"/> den tree Open up to the bottom of trees and what holes for wild animals. How big is the hole?	<input type="checkbox"/> apartment tree Have you ever seen a tree with two trunks? How did the tree grow?	<input type="checkbox"/> impossible tree This tree is growing in a hole in the ground, or in another impossible place. How did the tree get over water and grow?	<input type="checkbox"/> conk Conks are the living part of a fungus. They make the tree in contact with a wood-decaying fungus.
<input type="checkbox"/> storm damage Look for signs of lightning strikes on trees. Large tree trunks...	<input type="checkbox"/> carvings When people carve on trees they damage the growing part of the tree. How many carvings did you find?	<input type="checkbox"/> fence tree When fences are attached to trees, the bark grows along the fence. Look for white...	<input type="checkbox"/> blowdown An uprooted tree usually lies in the ground right next to a row of uprooted trees and stumps.

Play charades with the stars

Some constellations look like the animals that they are named after. Other constellations leave you scratching your head. What were those ancient people thinking?

Play charades with constellation names. Can your family or friends guess which one you are pretending to be?



Here's what I did!

- I hunted for bears!
- I searched for the Summer Triangle.
- I used my imagination to connect stars into pictures.
- I turned off all the lights we didn't need! I saved energy and kept the night dark for animals and stargazers!
- I played charades with the stars.
- I made a wish upon a star. If you could make a wish for yourself, this park, or our earth, what would it be?

Find out more!

Glow-in-the-Dark Constellations: A Field Guide for Young Stargazers by C.E. Thompson
The Sky is Full of Stars by Franklyn M. Branley

Kids!

Solve a mystery today!



Ages 3-5



Ages 6-8



Ages 9+



Ask for a Wisconsin Explorers booklet. Inside, you'll find nature activities, scavenger hunts, games, hikes, and crafts that will help you and your family explore this place!

Complete the requirements in the booklet, and you'll earn a collectable state symbol patch!



Memorials and Commemorations

Each year several requests are made to the property to place a memorial to a loved one or remember a significant event. So far the property has facilitated placement of benches within campgrounds and picnic areas. These standard benches provide a uniform look across the property. The goal is to provide a dignified and respectful memorial, a reflective place to put it, and a service to all property visitors. The

benches, produced by Aqualand Manufacturing in Woodruff, are purchased and then donated to the state forest. Forest staff install the bench at a site agreed to by the donors and the superintendent.

Other memorials on the state forest property are not allowed. Staff are sensitive to those survivors' wishes to memorialize a loved one, however these memorials can be intrusive to other state forest visitors. Any unau-

thorized memorials found on the property will be collected and returned to the owner if known or kept for a year before disposal. This policy is similar to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's policy on memorials. Please share your ideas with the superintendent, whose contact information is listed elsewhere in this publication. You may also contact them to discuss placement of a bench.



Looking for lunch



Dean Baker photograph

This pileated woodpecker surveys the woods looking for a dead tree that might contain its favorite meal - carpenter ants.



Ready

The NHAL forest campsites offer visitor's a fire ring and a picnic table.

Dean Baker photograph

Swimmer's Itch

Swimmer's itch occurs in some Wisconsin lakes each year. Swimmer's itch is caused by the larvae (immature stage) of certain flatworms that can be picked up while swimming. Technically known as schistosome dermatitis, swimmer's itch appears as red itching, bite-like welts within several hours of leaving the water. It is neither dangerous nor contagious, but is very uncomfortable.

When the larva penetrates the skin, it causes a small red welt. The degree of discomfort and bodily reaction varies with the person's sensitivity and the degree of infestation. In some people, the reaction may be hardly noticeable. Others have considerable pain, fever, severe itching, and swelling. The swelling usually subsides within a week, but the redness can last longer.

Swimmer's itch organisms are most commonly noticed in early summer, when the water is its warmest. The season is relatively short—usually four to six weeks, depending on the weather.

It's best to regard swimmer's itch in the same manner as mosquitos, woodticks and deer flies; there really is nothing that can be done to eliminate them, and our best action is to learn how to reduce exposure. Often these creatures we consider pests are signs of a healthy and diverse outdoors environment. Overall they shouldn't discourage us from enjoying the many outdoor activities we can experience when we venture into their outdoor habitat.

Preventing swimmer's itch

Some people have noted that waterproof sunscreens and lotions reduce the infections.

If you decide to go in the water when and where swimmer's itch larvae are present, stay clear of plants growing in the lake. Swimming rather than playing or wading in shallow water will reduce exposure. Swim offshore if possible. If swimmer's itch is known to be present, avoid swimming when winds are likely to be carrying the organisms into the beach.

The most important thing to do to pre-

vent the itch is to rub down very briskly right after leaving the water. This can crush the organisms before they can penetrate the skin. Showering shortly after leaving the water also should help.

Easing swimmer's itch

After the swimmer's itch organisms have penetrated the skin, there is little that can be done to treat it. You may get some relief by using soothing lotions such as calamine or lotions containing antihistamines and/or local anesthetics. In severe cases, see a physician.

More about the cause of swimmer's itch

Swimmer's itch is widespread in Wisconsin and has been reported in many other states and also in Europe and elsewhere in the world. There seem to be no special characteristics of lakes having the problem. Some of the finest recreational waters in the state experience swimmer's itch annually, whereas other lakes may have an occasional outbreak or none at all. An outbreak may be severe, but last for only a few days, or minor and last much of the season.

The flatworm parasite (schistosome) lives as an adult in suitable mammals and birds, such as mice and ducks. The adult worm sheds its eggs via the host's excretory tract into the water. Here they hatch into a free-swimming stage called a miracidium. The miracidium swims in search of a proper second host animal, a particular type of snail. If a proper snail is found, the miracidium will penetrate into the snail's tissue and develop further. After a three- or four-week development period, another free-swimming stage called a cercaria emerges from the snail in search of the proper primary bird or mammal host.

Life cycle of a flatworm: (A) blood fluke carried by bird. (B) egg. (C) miracidium. (D) snail host. (E) cercaria seeking host.

The cercariae release normally occurs when the water temperatures reach their near-maximum summer temperature. This usually occurs in late June or early

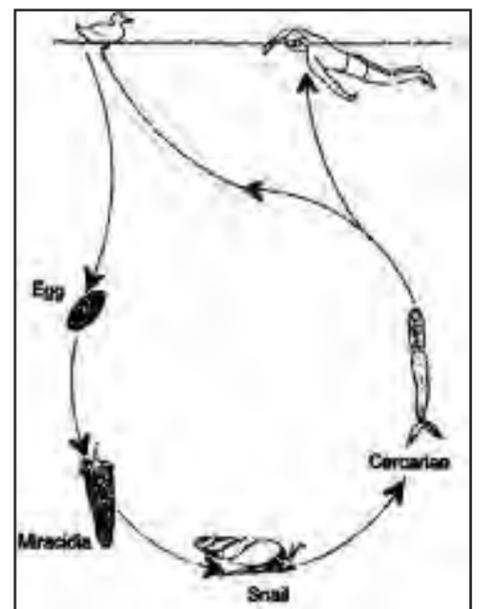
July in northern Wisconsin, coinciding with peak water recreational activities. At this time the organism can accidentally contact bathers and cause swimmer's itch. In years of warm spring weather, swimmer's itch has occurred as early as May in northwestern Wisconsin.

A swimmer's itch problem may develop with a few as two percent of the snails infected. However, snail populations may be as high as 400 per square meter. One infected snail may release up to 4,000 cercariae per day. At the two percent infection rate, this would mean up to 32,000 cercariae would be produced per square meter per day. On a typical 100' x 100' beach area, this translates into a potential 30 million cercariae released each day.

Most cercariae are released between noon and 2 p.m. With little free-swimming abilities, the cercariae will swim to the surface to optimize their chance of contacting a suitable animal host. Concentrated near the surface, wind and currents may carry the cercariae up to four miles from the release area.

The cercariae may not penetrate the skin until after the bather leaves the water, at which time the person may feel a slight tingling sensation. The cercariae are soon killed by the body's natural defense mechanism, but will continue to cause irritation. Studies have shown that 30 to 40 percent of people contacting the parasites are sensitive and experience irritation. Small children playing in shallow water are most susceptible because of the alternate wetting and drying with the arms, legs and waist area most prone to infection.

There is no effective way for people to eliminate swimmer's itch on their beach. Any attempts to control swimmer's itch by treatment to kill either the cercariae or their snail hosts are ineffective because cercariae are capable of swimming or drifting long distances from non-treated areas. It makes no difference if your beach area is sandy, rocky or weedy. Host snails will live on all sites and one species which commonly harbors swimmer's itch actually



prefers sandy-bottom areas.

Feeding of ducks should be discouraged if swimmer's itch is known to be a problem on the lake, since waterfowl are an important adult host to the parasite. New occurrences of swimmer's itch seem to be strongly associated with people feeding and attracting ducks.

In recent years, there have been experimental attempts at treating the host birds with veterinary medicines. The theory is to rid the birds of the adult parasite before they can infect the snail population with miracidia. Depending on the different kinds and numbers of adult hosts, success at this method will be limited to very specific situations. Thus far, the procedure is considered impractical on a lakewide scale in Wisconsin.

Modern pesticide laws prohibit treatments as they were historically attempted. Treatments to kill snails are very harsh and kill many non-target plants and animals and may also lead to contaminated sediments. Some high-use public beaches on specific sites where incoming drift of cercariae is unlikely, have been issued permits for a highly reduced treatment, but the result is very temporary and questionable. Anyone proposing any kind of pesticide or chemical treatment for any purpose must obtain a permit from the Department of Natural Resources.

NHAL campground opening and closing dates, 2014

Open except during winter snow period (not plowed)

Crystal	Muskie	Firefly	Indian Mounds	
Carrol	Razorback	West Star	North Trout	Big Lake

Opening the Thursday before fishing opener (May 1); closing the Tuesday after Columbus Day weekend (Oct. 14)

Starrett	Gresham	Buffalo
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Opening Monday before Memorial Day weekend (May 19); Closing Tuesday after Labor Day weekend (Sept. 2)

South Trout	Cunard	East Star	Plum
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Opening Monday before Memorial Day weekend (May 19); Closing Tuesday after Columbus Day weekend (Oct. 14)

Sandy Beach

The Northern Highland Fishery Research Area

The Northern Highland Fishery Research Area contains one of the largest fishery data bases in the world, obtained from five lakes: Escanaba, Palette, Nebish, Spruce, and Mystery. All lakes are managed by the DNR, using and evaluating different strategies.

These five lakes have been managed as experimental waters since 1946. Every fish taken by anglers over the years has been counted and measured in this longest continuous record of angler harvest in the world.

Research on these lakes has included stocking everything from walleye to coho salmon; size limits on smallmouth bass, northern pike and largemouth bass; cisco biology; smallmouth bass nesting success; chemical treatment of small lakes with unbalanced fish populations; fish feeding habits; factors affecting walleye fishing success and reproduction; and testing and validating creel survey methods.

Along with fishery data, water temperature and weather data are collected year-round, making up one of the largest fishery data-bases in the world. Fishery professionals from all over the world request data from this unique research station.

Wisconsin is the only state in the union with a continuous research program of this type. When most states have research projects that last several years, why does Wisconsin collect such long term data?

The striking advantage is that biologists can discover trends and relationships in long-term data that wouldn't show up during a study period of several years. And because the lakes are typical of northeastern Wisconsin lakes, results will continue to provide fishery biologists with valuable baseline information.

Knowing how and why fish populations change leads to better management. For example, long-term monitoring of angler catch rates shows that today's angler is no more successful at catching walleyes than anglers of the 1940's! And that's despite the advent of depth finders, underwater cameras, trolling motors and a variety of new lures and techniques.



Contributed photograph

This remote fishery research station is nestled in the 232,000-acre Northern Highland State Forest of Vilas County, 3.5 miles from paved roads. The station is powered entirely by a solar panel electrical system and back-up AC generators.

There is no closed season for any species except that lake trout fishing on Palette Lake is not allowed, as noted. Current fishing regulations are listed above to the right.

Escanaba Lake

Walleye:
28-inch minimum length limit and daily bag of one species other than walleye:
No length or bag limit

Nebish Lake

No fish are allowed for bait
Smallmouth bass:
No fish can be kept from 9-12 inches;
Bag limit of 5/day
Other species: No length or bag limit

Mystery Lake:

All species:
No length or bag limit

Spruce Lake

Only artificial bait allowed
Largemouth bass:
12-inch minimum length limit;
bag of 2/day
Other species:
No length or bag limit

Palette Lake

Smallmouth bass:
22-inch minimum length limit;
bag of 1/day
Lake trout:
No fishing allowed
Other species:
No length or bag limit

Caywood Shooting Range gets a facelift

A major reconstruction of the Caywood Shooting Range on Hwy. 51 north of Woodruff, was finished late summer 2013 and features a 100-yard rifle range, a 25-yard pistol range, and a shotgun area as well as an archery range and improved fencing.

The range improvements were paid

for by the Pittman-Robertson Account, funded by an excise tax on guns and ammunition and other sporting goods.

Improvements planned for Caywood Range in 2014 include the addition of restrooms, and parking lot improvements.



Staff photograph

Construction crews moved a lot of earth to create the new Caywood Shooting Range.

Native plants of the NHAL State Forest

by Colleen Matula
WDNR Forest Ecologist

Native, wild plants present a wonderful opportunity for you to enjoy Northern Wisconsin's natural beauty, its landscapes and its changing seasons. Colorful blossoms and greenery are found in woodlands, wetlands, meadows, streams and lakes on the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest. This diversity reflects the Northern Highlands ecological landscape, known for its pitted outwash plains and kettle lakes mixed with extensive forests and large peatlands. Current forest vegetation is primarily aspen, with white, red and jack pine in both natural and plantation form. Northern hardwood forests, though reduced in extent, still occur on the more mesic soils. Lowland conifer occupies the many peatlands that are scattered throughout the state forest.

When viewing native plants, timing and location are important. Early spring wildflowers or known as "spring ephemeral" plants are a special group of woodland flowers. Ephemeral flowers are so named because they appear above ground in early spring before the trees had a chance to unfurl their leaves. They flower and fruit and then die back into the ground all in a short two-month period. Bloodroot, Cut-leaved Toothwort, Trout Lily and Trilliums are some examples that emerge in April and are all gone by May or June. As a group, they constitute one of the largest groups of wildflowers in northern Wisconsin. By the time the warm winds of summer begin to blow, these flowers are long gone, often unnoticed by the casual nature explorer. Other plants such as ferns, asters and sunflowers are best viewed mid-to-late summer in more open, sunny habitats.

There are also numerous rare and endemic plants to the Northern Highlands landscape and warrant special protection. Several orchids such as the Calypso and Rams Head orchid are found in special habitats with numbers

that are few because of some direct threats. These threats include over abundance of earthworms, deer browse, invasive species, and climate change. Because of these concerns, some direct impacts have been researched on the state forest. Above all keep in mind, all plants are protected on Wisconsin's public lands. So when visiting native plants in their habitat, please take only pictures and leave only footprints so that you and others can return again to enjoy these treasures of the State Forest.

When planning to view native plants and wildflowers don't forget to bring the following: a state forest map, wildflower or plant guide, camera, bug repellent and water, if on a longer hike. Some of the best places to view wildflowers and other native plants are on the many trail systems throughout the State Forest such as Fallison, North Trout Lake and the Plum Lake area. Some recommended wildflower and plant guides include Newcomb's Wildflower Guide by Lawrence Newcomb, Trailside Botany by John Bates, and Wildflowers of Wisconsin by Stan Tekiela. Also, a wildflower list for the State Forest can be obtained at the state forest ranger stations, Trout Lake headquarters and the Crystal Lake Nature Center.

Enjoy these local treasures.



Snow trillium

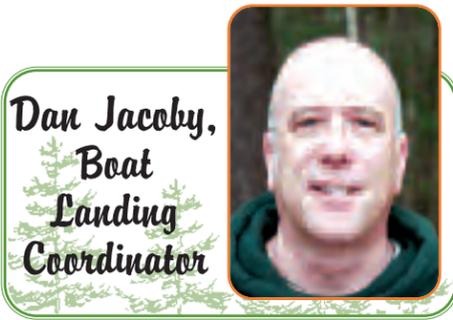
Boat landings and water trails

The water levels of lakes on the Northern Highland-American Legion (NHAL) State Forest are still below normal. The water levels have improved 2011 but are still very low on seepage lakes. Seepage lakes are those which have no inlet or outlet and are affected most by drought.

2011 started out with above normal rains but summer and fall were below normal once again. We are not back to previous low water levels but still have very few lakes at normal or full status. Plan to have about the same or slightly better water levels as last year. Above normal, early summer rainfalls in 2012 are needed and could help you to launch on some of those lakes that were difficult to access last year.

Currently all landings on the NHAL State Forest are open. Small boats, canoes, and kayaks are still able to access all the lakes. Boarding docks have been adjusted at many landings and may no longer be attached to the usual approach ramp. Some landings will not have a boarding dock due to excessive low water.

Before unloading, always walk around and look at the launch site first. Look to see if it is deep enough to launch and float your boat. Check the ground surface and slope to see if you will need four-wheel drive to pull out the weight of the boat and trailer. Remember, it is easier to launch a boat, than to pull the boat and trailer back up the ramp. There may be



Dan Jacoby,
Boat
Landing
Coordinator

lakes nearby with water levels more suited to your boat and trailer. Hip boots or waders in your towing vehicle along with oars or paddles in the boat may be helpful in lakes with shallow, flat areas.

We recommend several things that can keep landings functioning:

Trim-up to power load. This technique pushes surface water back and will propel your boat onto the trailer. Use the hand winch to pull the remaining cable and boat into the cradle. Leaving your motor down will push sand and gravel back, which builds a sand reef between you and the deeper part of the lake. The reef that is formed from not trimming up or tilting up the motor can eventually become impassable. We have “No Power Loading” signs up this year to discourage the practice but realize some trailers by design require some power to push a boat onto the bunks. Coasting on using as little power as needed will not be near as detrimental to the ramp as extreme power loading



Staff photograph

Before unloading, look to see if the launch site is deep enough.

Always use four-wheel drive (4WD) to launch and pick up your boat as the added traction will keep the ground from being torn up and rutted. If equipped, use 4WD to avoid spinning tires which can damage the surface of the approach.

One new suggestion we would like to make would be to tread lightly on access sites. We are seeing increased shoreline erosion. Try to concentrate use, to one area of shoreline. Without the water levels up to the normal shore, people tend to climb up and down the shore in multiple areas and cause the sandy soil to collapse

or erode. Shoreline areas are unique ecosystems and it is up to us to keep them in good shape.

We appreciate the cooperation we receive from the public. The public should feel free to inform us if they notice something at the landing that needs attention. Our goal is to provide safe, clean and functional access to water. Public input is an important part of achieving that goal.

Dan Jacoby is the NHAL Boat Landing Coordinator and can be reached at 715-385-3355 extension 118.

Invasives on NHAL

Today nearly every corner of the globe is impacted both economically and environmentally by invasive, exotic plants. When introduced to a new area, their uncontrolled growth threatens native plant communities, degrades fish and wildlife habitat and restricts recreational activities. On the NH-AL State Forest invasive plant and animal invasions are showing up both in

aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

What you can do: learn how to identify them; educate friends and local nurseries; if you find a weed infested area, make the landowner aware; avoid spreading the plants; and participate in local weed control and awareness activities. These are some invasive, exotics found on the NH-AL and some weed control efforts in action.



Asian Honeysuckle



Purple loosestrife



Garlic mustard



Common buckthorn



Staff photo

Honeysuckle control at Star Lake.

Goods from the Northwoods

Birch bark, burls, berries and boughs – these are just some “Goods from the Northwoods” or Nontimber forest products (NTFPs) that are gathered and used for food, medicine, and crafts. Non-timber forest products have been important to the livelihood of the inhabitants of North America from prehistoric times to the present. As elsewhere in the world, early inhabitants of North America made extensive use of the vegetation that surrounded them. Archaeological evidence indicates, for example, that by 6,000 B.C. Native American residents of the Upper Great Lakes Basin relied heavily on plant foods gathered from the forest.

Learning how and what to gather is a process. Many gatherers in our area learned about plant uses from their families, which is especially true for plants that were commonly harvested during childhood—berries, fiddleheads, fir, and hazelnuts. I remember being sent out with my brothers and sisters to pick pails full of wild strawberries and raspberries. The job was not done until all of our buckets were full. This method of knowledge transfer was particularly significant for Native American NTFP gatherers who learn and teach about medicinal plants by speaking with elders and by participating in hands-on group gathering activities and ceremonies. Even today folks that want to learn more about harvesting can rely on books, including field guides and the Internet for additional information about the use of forest products.

From the view of most forest managers, gathering is a harmless and interesting economic activity but certain regulations and restrictions, including where and how much harvested, do apply. There are certain guidelines to follow when interested in gathering from the forest. Here are a few tips on harvesting:

- **Permits and guidelines.** Before harvest, find out about policies, guidelines and permits. The State WDNR,

Forest Service and Counties all have different policies on harvest so it's important to be aware of this. Permits allow the agency to monitor the demand and use of various products. Failure to have a permit may result in a fine.

- **Be careful where you step.** While harvesting, it is easy to damage a sensitive environment in a short amount of time. Plant populations can be destroyed by trampling. Certain soils are easily compacted, which affects root growth and plant health. While harvesting, try to minimize the number of trips you make to avoid unnecessary damage.

- **Know what you are picking.** Sometimes desirable plants and fungi have look-alikes and are difficult to identify. Proper identification can mean the difference between sinking your teeth into a delicious edible morel and becoming sick from ingesting a false one. To help make positive identifications, carry a guidebook that describes plants and fungi found in your area.

At various times throughout the year, there are classes offered that teach about harvesting and use whether it's birch bark basket weaving to edible mushroom identification. Here are a few products that are harvested in the Northwoods and info on each.

- **Birch bark.** The birch tree – wood, leaves, roots and sap – have proved to be useful to people throughout history. Yet it is the bark that stands out among the trees many gifts. Birch bark can be collected from dead trees and on the ground and used for many decorative items. The bark can also be harvested on a live tree during mid-June to early July. Less than 1/8 of an inch of the outer bark is harvested while the dark inner bark is maintained. Harvesting bark can injure a tree so it's best to follow guidelines from an experienced harvester. Birch bark basket classes are popular in the Northwoods. Never harvest birch bark from public use

See **GOODS...** page 32

On the hunt



Dean Baker photograph

A loon pauses briefly for a picture on Sweeney Lake before continuing to fish. Loons spend most of their time in the water and mainly come ashore only to nest.

Who is in the tree?



Dean Baker photograph

This Osprey scans the shallow water on Gilmore Lake for a meal. Osprey dine almost exclusively on live fish. When flying with a catch, an Osprey will line up a fish's head facing forward to cut wind resistance.

GOODS

From page 31

areas in the state forest.

Balsam boughs. The smell of Christmas is in the air when balsam boughs are being harvested. Boughs are usually harvested from mid-September until November. Proper harvest of boughs is done 50 feet from a road and includes harvesting only a portion of the branch leaving green behind so it can regenerate. Bough harvest can be an economic opportunity during the late fall season selling for about \$500 per ton to local wreath making companies.

Pine cones. There are a variety of conifer trees in northern Wisconsin that produces cones of various shapes and sizes. Cones have been used for decorative displays for many projects. Harvesting cones can also be a small economic opportunity when the state nurseries are in need of conifer and other tree seeds. Here, the state nurseries can pay the harvester per bushel of cones they pick following appropriate guidelines. If interested, contact the nearest state nursery.

The final product from gathering can be a rewarding experience whether it's a birch bark basket or a beautifully carved, wood bowl. There are so many creations and products that can be gathered from the woods, but proper harvest and following guidelines are so important to maintaining a sustainable resource for future generations.

More information on Nontimber Forest products, see the following websites: <http://www.myminnesota-woods.umn.edu/category/nontimber-forest-products/>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/TimberSales/nonCommercial.html>



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