



# Interim Forest Management Plan

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## Property Identifiers

Property Name: **REM Thornapple River compartment 130, REM Weirgor R compartment 110**

Property Designation or Type **Fisheries Management.**

DNR Property Code(s) (DNR Prop Code Number) **REM Thornapple River 4715, REM Weirgor River 4730**

Forestry Property Code:**5531**

Property Location - County: **RUSK**

Property Acreage(s): **Big Weirgor Creek 117 acres. Thornapple River 61 acres.**

Master Plan Date:  
(if property has one)

Property Manager: **Greg Rublee**

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## Property Assessment

### Ecological Landscape description and property context

Big Weirgor Creek and the Thornapple River properties both lie within the North Central Forest Ecological Landscape in Rusk County, WI.

The Big Weirgor property is located in T36N R7W Sec 5.

The Thornapple River property is found in T35N R7W Sec 33 and T34N R7W Sec 4.

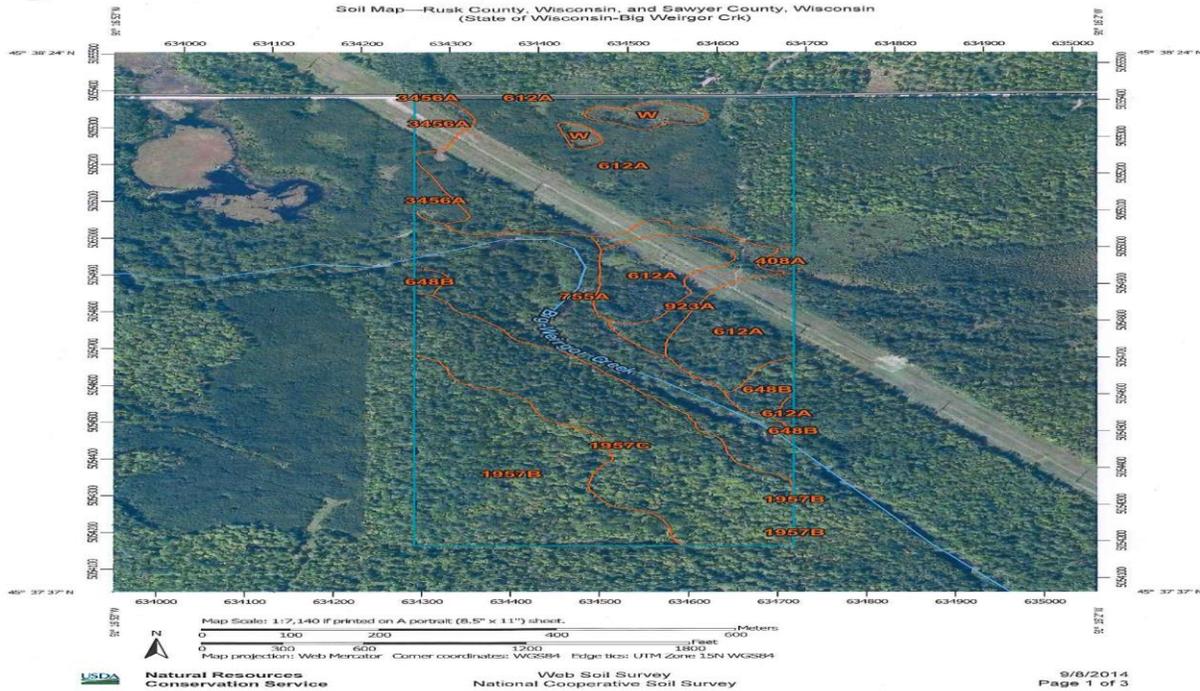
**General property description** – management, adjacent land uses, topography, soils, etc.

**Big Weirgor Creek** is a medium sized stream located in northwestern Rusk County. It flows in an easterly direction through the Blue Hills for three-fourths of its length. Upon meeting Little Weirgor Creek, it starts on a southerly course and flows through rolling farmland to its confluence with the Chippewa River. The water is slightly stained. Stream bank cover consists mainly of aspen, mixed hardwood and tag alder. Marginal trout water temperatures, low productivity and limited natural reproduction of brook trout have dictated fisheries management plans. The stream is a class 3 trout water which is stocked annually with a "put-and-take" fishery objective. Stocking records go back to 1959 and shows that the more tolerant brown trout dominated the stocking history, with rainbow and brook trout also recorded. More recently, small fingerling brown trout strains have been stocked annually since the year 2000. The 117 acre state owned property is accessed at the northern border along Taylor Road and is bisected by a .51 mile stretch of Big Weirgor Creek. The average channel width of the stream within the property is 35 feet. Rusk County land runs along the entire western boundary. The east and south boundaries are adjacent to privately owned land. Enbridge Energy maintains .4 miles of a cleared pipeline right of way which runs northwest to southeast through the northern half of the property east of the stream.



# Interim Forest Management Plan

Big Weirgor Creek property soil types – moderate to well drained



Soil Map—Rusk County, Wisconsin, and Sawyer County, Wisconsin

State of Wisconsin-Big Weirgor Crk

## Map Unit Legend

Rusk County, Wisconsin (WI107)				
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI	
408A	Lupton and Cathro soils, 0 to 1 percent slopes	0.5	0.4%	
612A	Magnor, very stony-Ossmer complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes	47.4	36.8%	
648B	Sconsin silt loam, 1 to 6 percent slopes	2.5	1.9%	
755A	Moppet, occasionally flooded-Fordum, frequently flooded complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes	20.8	16.1%	
923A	Capitola-Cebana complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes, very stony	4.6	3.6%	
1957B	Freon silt loam, bedrock-controlled ground moraine, 2 to 6 percent slopes, very stony	22.9	17.8%	
1957C	Freon silt loam, bedrock-controlled ground moraine, 6 to 18 percent slopes, very stony	24.7	19.2%	
3456A	Magnor, very stony-Magnor complex, ground moraine, 0 to 3 percent slopes	3.2	2.5%	
W	Water	2.2	1.7%	
<b>Subtotals for Soil Survey Area</b>		<b>128.9</b>	<b>99.9%</b>	
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>129.0</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Sawyer County, Wisconsin (WI113)				
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI	
612A	Magnor, very stony-Ossmer complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes	0.1	0.1%	
3456A	Magnor, very stony-Magnor complex, ground moraine, 0 to 3 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%	
<b>Subtotals for Soil Survey Area</b>		<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>129.0</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Web Soil Survey National Cooperative Soil Survey

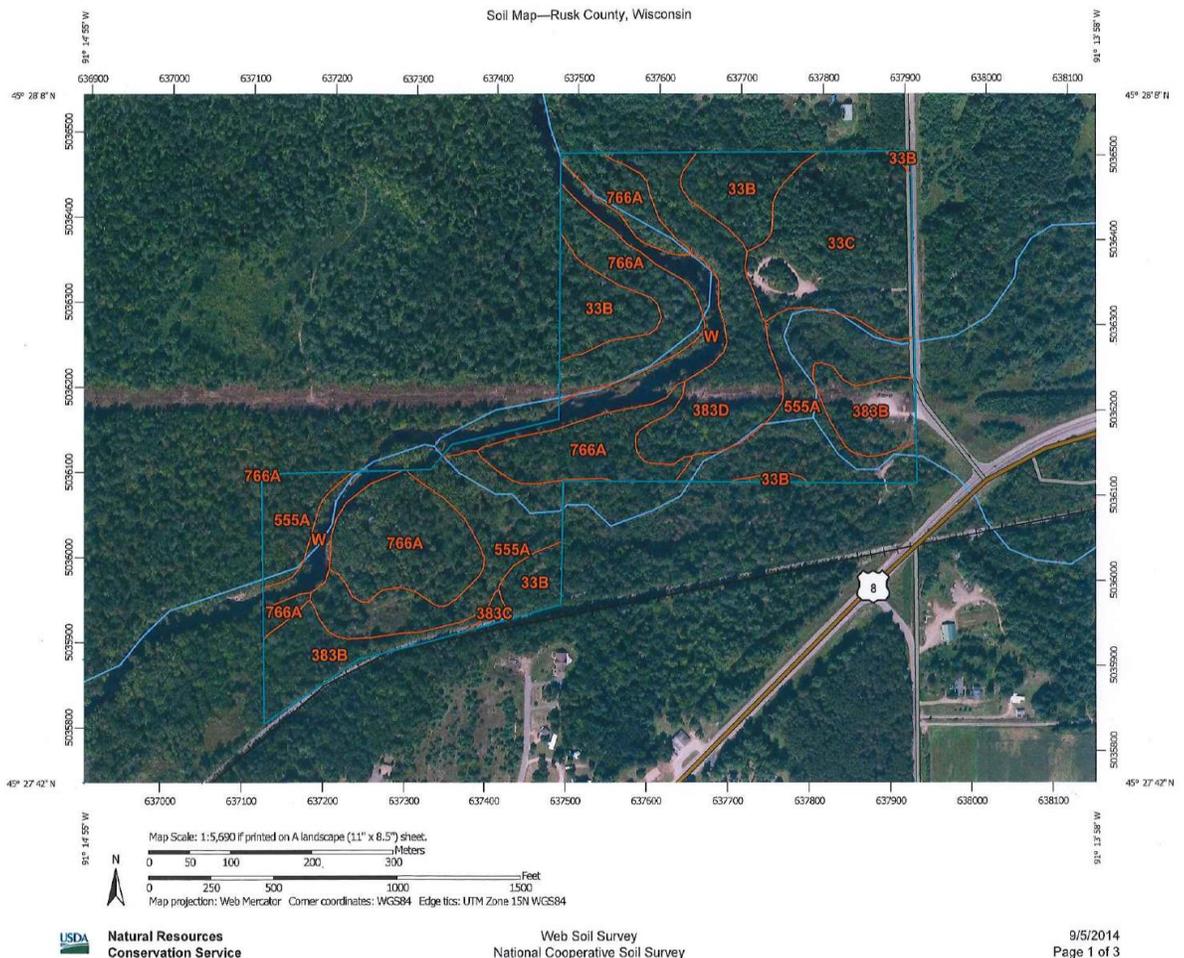
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**Thornapple River** flows .58 miles through the state owned fishery area with 1,000 feet of river frontage. Access to the parking area is east of Bruce, WI on Thornapple Road .15 miles north of Hwy 8. Rusk County previously owned the land which was used as a gravel pit. The Department of Natural Resources obtained this property from Rusk County in December 1998 for the main purpose of safeguarding critical Lake Sturgeon spawning habitat. The rocky stream habitat has significant biological value in attracting Lake Sturgeon to this historical spawning area every spring. Each year many people come to observe the spawning events by standing along the shoreline on this property. The local Wildlife Restoration Association (WRA) and Environmental Challenge program have submitted a plan for constructing a trail and sturgeon viewing area on the property but is currently on hold pending a long term maintenance agreement. There is also a 0.6 acre fenced in area on the property which is used as a trash and recycling center by the Town of Thornapple. Rusk County did not provide for the continued use of this property by the township as a recycle drop off point when ownership was transferred to the DNR, so a formal land use agreement was issued in July 2007 which allowed the township to continue their recycling operation on the state owned land. A powerline easement also bisects the property.

Thornapple River property soil types - moderate to well drained





# Interim Forest Management Plan

Thornapple River soil continued

## Map Unit Legend

Rusk County, Wisconsin (W107)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
33B	Chetek sandy loam, 1 to 6 percent slopes	6.5	10.4%
33C	Chetek sandy loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	8.6	13.7%
383B	Mahtomedi loamy sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	5.2	8.3%
383C	Mahtomedi loamy sand, 6 to 12 percent slopes	0.2	0.4%
383D	Mahtomedi loamy sand, 12 to 30 percent slopes	6.8	10.9%
555A	Fordum silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	15.1	24.1%
766A	Moppet fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	15.1	24.1%
W	Water	5.2	8.2%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>62.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Current forest types, size classes and successional stages:

The **Weirgor** Remnant property is made up of 6 stands for a total of 117 acres. Of the 6 stands only 3 are forested types.

- Stand 1 is a young aspen stand (A 0-5<sup>3</sup>) which originated in 2002 and is 30% of the forested acres at 25 acres.
- Stand 2 is a mature Aspen and Northern Hardwood type (A 5-11<sup>4</sup>/ NH 5-11<sup>1</sup>) which originated in 1936 and is 46% of the forested acres at 39 acres.
- Stand 3 is a Northern Hardwood stand (NH 15+<sup>3</sup>/NH11-15<sup>1</sup>) which originated in 1936 and is 24% of the forested acres at 19 acres.
- Stand 4 is typed as lowland brush and is non-productive at 28 acres.
- Stand 5 is the Weirgor River at 4 acres.
- Stand 6 is a utility right of way at 2 acres.

The **Thornapple** Remnant property is made up of 5 stands for a total of 61 acres. Of the 5 stands only 2 are forested types.

- Stand 1 is young aspen (A0-5<sup>2</sup>/PW 0-5<sup>1</sup>) which originated in 1990 and is 29% of the forested acres at 16 acres.
- Stand 2 is a mature aspen stand (A 5-11<sup>2</sup>/O 5-11<sup>1</sup>) which originated in 1965 and is 71% of the forested acres at 39 acres.
- Stand 3 is the Thornapple River.
- Stand 4 is a Rail right of way.
- Stand 5 is a Parking area.



# Interim Forest Management Plan

## **NHI: Endangered, threatened, Special Concern species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)**

These properties contain Element Occurrences for several uncommon species. The NHI database will be screened prior to any management activities taking place.

## **Wildlife Action Plan Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA)**

**Big Weirgor Creek** - Large Blocks of Predominately Older Northern Forest – Upper Midwest/Regional Significance

Large blocks of forest containing a preponderance of older forest provide an opportunity to manage for the mature to older age classes. These blocks are farther south, more isolated and potentially more susceptible to climate change, therefore, slightly reducing their significance for maintaining SGCN populations. The area features a continuum of an extensive matrix of older northern hardwood forest with imbedded lakes, wetlands, and bedrock including Northern Mesic Forest, Northern Dry-Mesic Forest, Northern Wet-Mesic Forest, Northern Wet Forest, Open Bog, Muskeg, Northern Hardwood Swamp, Northern Sedge Meadow, and Bedrock Glades.

COA(s): Diamond Roof (4.08), Drumlin Hardwoods (4.07), **Blue Hills** (4.05) Upper Flambeau Woods (4.10), and Skinner Creek (4.11)

Public Land – Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands, Beverly Lake Fishery Area, **Devils Creek Fishery Area**, Sawyer County Forest, **Rusk County Forest**, Barron County Forest.

Legacy Places – **Blue Hills**, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forests, Laona Hemlock-Hardwoods, Pipestone Hills.

Important Bird Areas – McCaslin Brook, **Blue Hills**.

COA(s): Blue Hills Headwater Streams (A.38)

Public Land – Barron County Forest, **Rusk County Forest**, Sawyer County Forest.

Legacy Places – **Blue Hills**.

**Thornapple River** - Medium-sized river systems including riparian communities including Coldwater Streams, Coolwater Streams, Warmwater Rivers.

Medium-sized river systems including riparian communities including Coldwater Streams, Coolwater Streams, Warmwater Rivers.

COA(s): Upper Forks of the Chippewa River (A.43), Flambeau River (A.41), and Brunet and Thornapple Rivers (A.53).

Public Land – Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Flambeau State Forest, Sawyer County Forest, Ashland County Forest, Price County Forest.

Legacy Places – Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Flambeau River State Forest.

## **Significant cultural or archeological features**

There are no known cultural or archeological sites on the Big Weirgor or the Thornapple River properties.

**Invasive species** – No known invasives on properties

## **Existing State Natural Areas (SNA) designations/natural community types limited in the landscape**

North Central Forest

Major – None

Minor – Mesic Cedar Forest, Black Spruce Swamp, Tamarack Poor Swamp.

## **Primary public uses (recreation)**

**Big Weirgor Creek** – Hunting, fishing, trapping, non-consumptive uses

**Thornapple River** - Hunting, fishing, trapping, sturgeon spawning viewing area



# Interim Forest Management Plan

**Biotic Inventory Status** – not completed for either property

**Deferral/consultation area designations** - none

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## IFMP components

### Management Objectives:

The forest management objectives for these properties focus on management prescriptions found in the silviculture handbook. The primary recreation uses for the property are fishing, hunting and trapping. Where possible early successional stands will be promoted which greatly benefit ruffed grouse, American woodcock, beaver, and many other species of Wisconsin wildlife. Providing a diversity of age-classes within the aspen type will also enhance the value of the property for wildlife. The northern hardwood stands will be managed by single-tree selection which will create an uneven-aged stand. Promotion of the regeneration of mast producing trees while maintaining a diversity of species is important. Snags, nesting and cavity trees will be left uncut within these stands. Small pockets of aspen inclusions will be regenerated to aspen whenever possible.

### Property Prescriptions:

Timber management activities on all of these properties will be subject to the approval of the property's Manager. General Silvicultural Prescriptions for the properties will be conducted as stated below for each forest type.

**Aspen:** These stands will be maintained by coppice harvests (even-aged management). The target rotation age for these stands will be 40-60 years, influenced by factors such as site conditions, size of harvests, and accessibility. Age-class diversity will be maintained by reducing harvest unit size and harvest intervals. Snags, high-quality cavity, mast, and conifer tree species will be left uncut where appropriate as well as green tree retention areas.

**Northern Hardwood:** These stands will be managed by selection harvests (uneven-aged). This will improve stand quality and promote regeneration by the removal of low quality trees and releasing crop trees following the recommended stocking guidelines. Canopy gaps will be created to favor less shade tolerant species such as white ash, birch, oak, and basswood. This will add diversity to the stands. Hemlock, cedar, and white pine will be favored as retention trees, as well as snags, den trees, and mast trees.

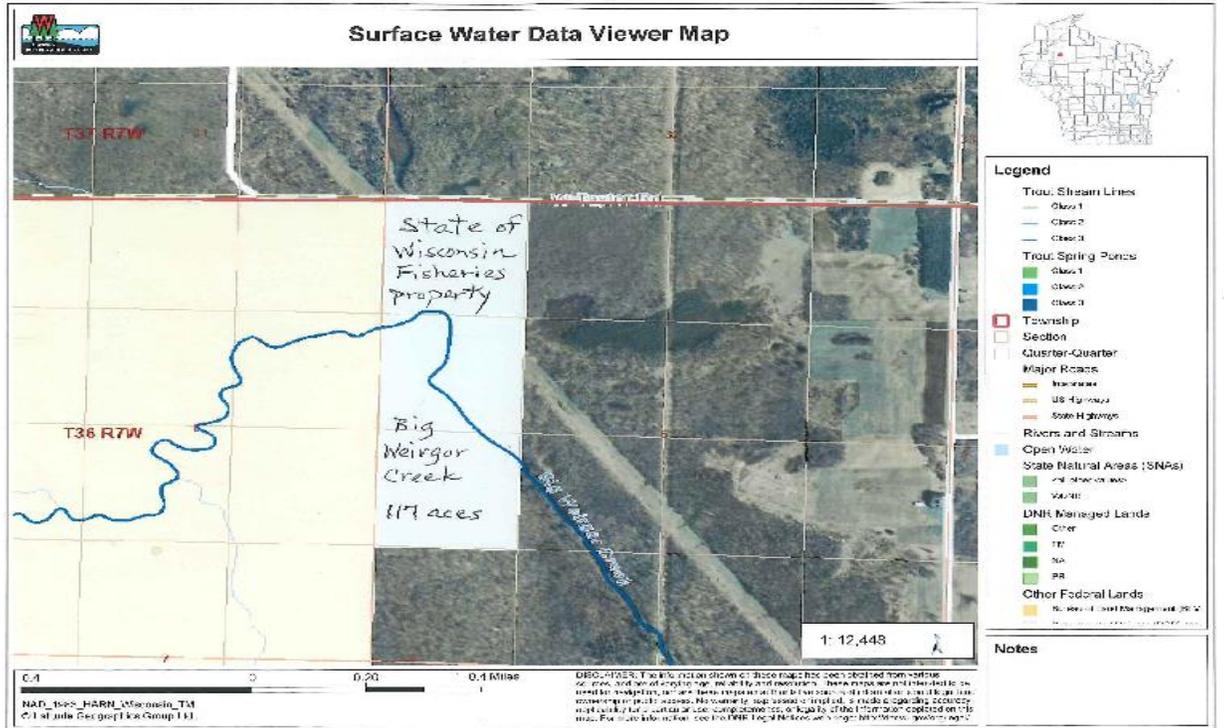
## Summary of Public Involvement and Comments Received



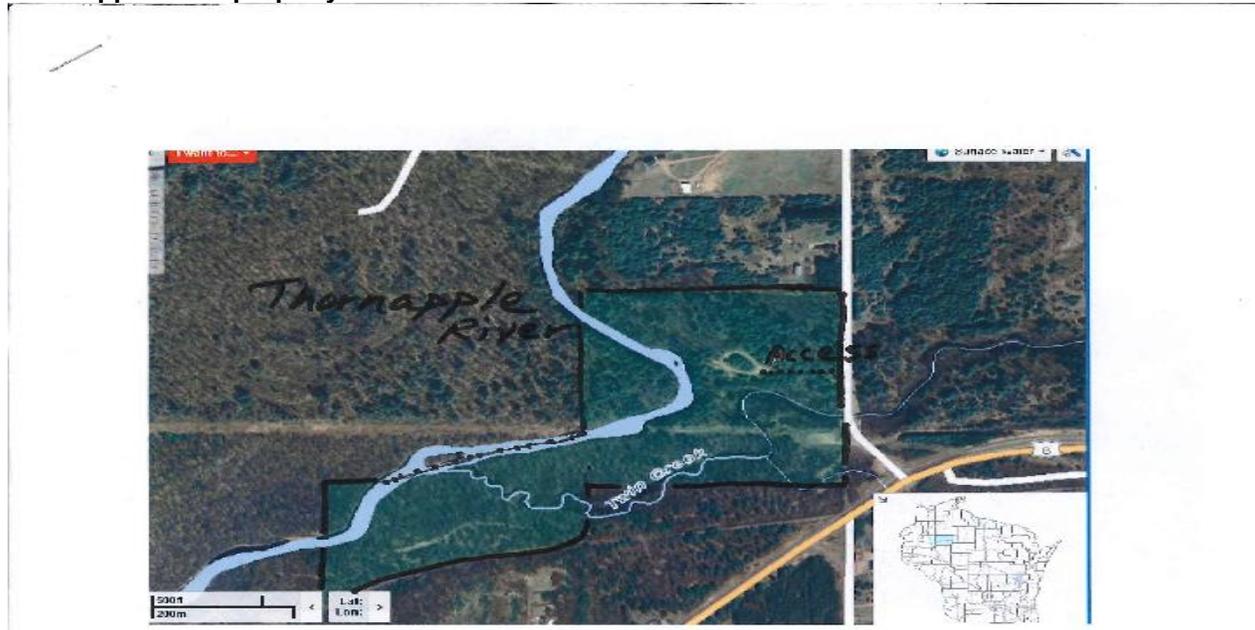
# Interim Forest Management Plan

## Property Boundary and ownership Maps

### Big Weirgor Creek property



### Thornapple River property



61 acres  
Thornapple R. property  
(east of Bruce) 8/8/08



# Interim Forest Management Plan

PREPARED BY:

Michael T. Vogelzang 5/27/15  
Property Manager Date

APPROVED:

Michael T. Vogelzang 5/27/15  
Area Program Supervisor Date

REVIEWED BY:

Robert D. Hanser 5-26-15  
Forester Date

[Signature] 6-15-15  
District Ecologist Date