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# Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan

2012-2016

Effective January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2016

Also covering the municipalities and towns within Forest County



Prepared by: North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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# ABSTRACT

- TITLE:** FOREST COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN  
2012-2016 Effective January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2016
- SUBJECT:** This report 1) Assesses the existing recreation system in Forest County; 2) Identifies recreation needs based upon public input, past plans, and recreation standards; and 3) Establishes recommendations for improving the recreation system over the next five years.
- Submission of this report to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) establishes eligibility for the County and local units of government for a variety of Federal and State Aids to purchase land and to add facilities to existing outdoor recreation lands. The Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan is required to apply for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and Wisconsin Stewardship Grant funding.
- Non-profit groups, foundations, and the general public may also use this document to coordinate their own private efforts for developing outdoor recreation facilities.
- DATE:** December 2011
- AGENCY:** Forest County Forestry Department  
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- DISCLAIMER:** This plan was prepared by the staff of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission under agreement with the above contact.

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- A. Outdoor Recreation Surveys
- B. NCWRPC Generated SCORP 2005 – 2010 Summary
- C. Facility Development Standards
- D. State and Federal Grant Programs

# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

## **PURPOSE**

The main purpose of completing the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan is to provide direction toward meeting the current and future recreation needs of Forest County. This is accomplished through an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities, and the establishment of recommendations to meet identified needs.

Adoption of this plan by the Forest County Board and subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR), will continue eligibility of the county and its local units of government for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), and Stewardship Funds. Adoption by all municipalities is not necessary if they wish to cooperate with Forest County to use this plan for grant applications. Local government grant applications have a better chance of approval if Forest County applies on their behalf.

Non-profit groups, foundations, and the general public may also use this document to coordinate their own private efforts for developing outdoor recreation facilities.

## **STATUTORY BASE**

This Outdoor Recreation Plan was prepared pursuant to Wisconsin Statute §23.30 Outdoor Recreation Program. This section serves to “promote, encourage, coordinate, and implement a comprehensive long-range plan to acquire, maintain, and develop for public use, those areas of the state best adapted to the development of a comprehensive system of state and local outdoor recreation facilities and services...”

## **PLAN COMPONENTS**

This plan addresses the outdoor recreation needs for the entire county, and each local government within Forest County.

Background information on Forest County was compiled to develop an understanding of the environmental and social characteristics of the county and their meaning for outdoor recreation. An inventory of existing recreational facilities exists in Chapter 3 – Existing Recreation Facilities – of this plan.

The existing recreation system was analyzed to determine current deficiencies and identify potential future projects through the year 2016. A combination of public survey compilation, standards analysis, and the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) were utilized to define recreational and open space needs.

The recommendations are general strategies and five-year action programs for recreation facility development. A series of possible tools to aid implementation of these recommendations are set

forth in Chapter 7 – Provisions For Updating. The plan concludes with a note on updating to insure that it remains relevant to the needs of the county over the entire five-year span.

## **PAST PLANS**

This outdoor recreation plan was written to continue the parks and recreation program established in the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plans of 1977-1982, 1989-1993, 1997-2001, & 2002-2006.

### Forest County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan

This 2006 – 2021 document was used to inventory existing recreation facilities shown on Map 3.

### Forest County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2012-2016

The Forest County Land and Water Conservation Committee developed this plan in 2011. The plan provides an inventory of the County's natural resources and a series of goals and objectives intended to improve and protect these resources in the future.

### North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan

This 2004 document is intended to guide the development of an interconnected bikeway system for the North Central Wisconsin Region. Potential trails are identified and an improvement description was created for each county that trails exist in to facilitate implementation.

Two abandoned rail corridors in Forest County have great potential. The rail line from Crandon to White Lake in Langlade County was recently abandoned, while the DNR and DOT have owned much of the rail corridor from Carter to Popple River for some time. These trails are shown on Map 1. (Note: The rail line from Carter to Popple River is complete and approved for hiking, biking, ATVing, and snowmobiling – Nicolet State Trail.)

### Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2005-2010

Completed in August 2006, this plan attempts to classify, measure, and ultimately provide for the preferences and needs of a statewide recreating public. Many factors, from changing demographic and land use trends, to recreational supply, and conflict with other recreation uses, affect the quality, supply, and demand for outdoor recreation.

This plan is summarized in Attachment B, and is what the State will use to determine where to approve grants.

### Forest County Comprehensive Plan

Adopted in 2011, this plan meets the smart growth requirement for the state of Wisconsin.

Insert Map 1 – Potential Trails and Legacy Areas

### ***State Trails Network Plan***

This 2001 document clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) role and strategy in the provision of all types of trails. The plan identifies a series of potential trail corridors that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. This statewide network of interconnected trails would be owned and maintained by municipalities, private entities, and partnerships of the two. Preserving transportation corridors, such as old rail lines, is specifically discussed as a very important strategy in the creation of recreational and alternative transportation corridors. These trails are shown on Map 1.

#### Segment 2—Forest Co. to Michigan, Nicolet State Trail (Northern Region)

The DNR partially acquired the Nicolet State Trail corridor from Gillett to Wabeno. The rest of the rail corridor in Forest Co., from Cavour to Wabeno, remains largely DOT-owned, with portions used for private rail by term agreement. The tracks from Wabeno to Laona have been removed as well as the tracks north of Cavour to the Michigan border, and this grade may be available for trail acquisition in the near future. (Note: See page 19 for the description of this completed trail.) This trail was developed in 2010 as a part of the state trails network plan.

#### Segment 13—Dresser to Michigan

This 250-mile-long east-west corridor consists of rail line, the Cattail Trail, which is owned by the DNR and operated by Polk and Barron counties, and an optional highway right-of-way. It would link with the proposed Hiles to Crandon snowmobile trail in Forest County. The use of roadways in Oneida and Forest counties are an alternative to the rail line.

#### Segment 56—Argonne to Shawano

This is an active rail corridor with abandonment expected in fall of 2000 on the segment from Crandon to White Lake. Argonne is on the Dresser to Michigan corridor in the north. This corridor runs along the east shore of Lake Metonga at Crandon, then runs south through forested lake areas of the Nicolet National Forest. This trail was completed in 2011 as a part of the state trails network plan.

#### Segment 69—Tomahawk to Crandon

This abandoned corridor would link these two communities by an off-road connector. This corridor intersects the Langlade County to Michigan corridor at Pelican Lake and links the Argonne to Shawano corridor in the east with the Tomahawk to Wausau corridor in the west. This short linking corridor provides opportunity to access the very popular Hiawatha-Bearskin Trail from other corridors to the east.

### ***2004 Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan***

The Chequamegon and Nicolet National Forests were combined into one forest in 1998. This 2004 document revised inconsistent policies between the two forests and provides direction for resource management over the next 10 to 15 years.

In 2004, the Forest revised its forest management plan. The revised plan contains a consistent ATV policy for both sides of the Forest

- No off-road or off trail use allowed (implemented on June 14, 2004).
- New trail construction allowed for up to 100 miles of trail on the Chequamegon side, and up to 85 total miles on the Nicolet side.

- All roads and trails closed to ATV use unless posted open with signs.
- All trails and Forest Service roads will be closed to ATV's every year from March 15 through April 30. Township designated roads are still open.
- No Intensive Use ("play areas") allowed on the Forest (Open 26 play area closed on June 14, 2004).
- Emergency closures can be issued locally where resources are being damaged or abused, or there are safety concerns.
- Management of timber to sustain wildlife an recreation.

***Wisconsin Land Legacy Report 2006-2056***

This report is a comprehensive inventory of the special places that will be critical to meet future conservation and outdoor recreation needs for the next fifty years. Some of the questions asked to guide creation of this report were: Which lands and waters remain unprotected that will be critical for conserving our plants and animals and their habitats? What gaps exist now (and will likely emerge in the future) in providing abundant and satisfying outdoor recreation? How can we most effectively build upon the state's existing investment in protected lands to fill conservation and recreation gaps? What special places will our children and grandchildren wish we had protected? The study focused on identifying what of our state or regionally significant green infrastructure remains to be protected.

The Land Legacy report recommends protection of these lands by using federal, state, and local funding opportunities; along with: possibly creating new kinds of incentives for landowners, working to craft comprehensive plans, or offering different types of technical assistance.

Prioritization of Land Legacy Areas is described in SCORP Chapter 3 located in Attachment B.

Each Forest County Legacy Area is summarized below with 5 stars representing the highest level for that category:

**CN Chequamegon-Nicolet**  
**National Forest**

Size	Large
Protection Initiated	Substantial
Protection Remaining	Limited
Conservation Significance	☆☆☆☆☆
Recreation Potential	☆☆☆☆☆

**PE Peshtigo River**

Size	Large
Protection Initiated	Substantial
Protection Remaining	Moderate
Conservation Significance	☆☆☆
Recreation Potential	☆☆☆☆☆

**LH Laona Hemlock Hardwoods**

Size	Small
Protection Initiated	Limited
Protection Remaining	Substantial
Conservation Significance	☆☆☆☆☆
Recreation Potential	☆☆

**UP Upper Wolf River**

Size	Large
Protection Initiated	Substantial
Protection Remaining	Moderate
Conservation Significance	☆☆☆☆☆
Recreation Potential	☆☆☆☆☆

Other Areas of Interest includes:

- North Otter Creek
- Elvoy and Brule Creeks

## CHAPTER 2 FOREST COUNTY OVERVIEW

### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

#### Introduction

This section describes the physical features that make up Forest County. This information is essential in determining the potential as well as the limitations of an area for recreation development. Recreation planners use this kind of data to determine which resources to develop and which resources to protect or preserve.

#### Geography and Land Use

Forest County in northeastern Wisconsin has a total of 669,231 acres; of which 92.0% is forested, 1.8% is used for agriculture, 3.4% is water, 0.6% for open space, 0.8% is for transportation (which includes airports and roads), 1.0% for residential, and 0.1% is for commercial and industrial uses. Forest County is bound on the north by the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and the Brule River, which forms the Wisconsin-Michigan boundary; on the east by Florence and Marinette Counties; on the south by Oconto and Langlade Counties; and on the west by Oneida and Vilas Counties. See Map 2.

#### Topography and Geology

Forest County is located entirely in the Northern Highlands physiographic region, which was glaciated during the Pleistocene Age by the Langlade Lobe.

The elevation in the county generally ranges from about 1,800 feet above sea level in the west and northwest to about 1,300 feet in the southeast. The third highest point in the state, Sugar Bush Hill, is a drumlin east of Crandon. It rises about 1,938 feet above sea level. The west end of McCaslin Mountain is about 1,610 feet above sea level.

Forest County is underlain by igneous & metamorphic bedrock that makes up the southern extension of the Canadian Shield. The bedrock surface is irregular throughout the county and slopes generally to the east and southeast. The extreme northwest part of the county near the Michigan border is underlain by metavolcanic and metasedimentary rock and an iron formation. A significant sulfide deposit of zinc and copper is also in the southwestern part of the county, north of Little Sand Lake. Underlying the southeast corner is the Hager porphyry rock and a quartzite and conglomerate rock upland, which includes the prominent relief feature of McCaslin Mountain protruding through the glacial deposits. Bedrock exposed in other areas is typically located in topographic lows surrounded by glaciofluvial deposits, such as the gneiss outcrop on the south shore of Pine Lake.

Insert Map 2 – General Location

## Surface Water

Forest County has many streams, lakes, and rivers that furnish a good supply of surface water. The county has 24,094 acres of surface water. There are 824 lakes in the county. These lakes make up 22,324 acres of water. Streams in the county have a surface area of 1,770 acres and a total length of 710 miles. The majority of these streams are classified as trout waters. Surface water is used mainly for recreation, stock watering, and wildlife.

The Eastern Continental Divide directs the flow of surface water in Forest County into two major bodies of water – Green Bay and the Mississippi River. The vast majority of the surface water in Forest County flows to the east and southeast and eventually into Green Bay. Three major rivers – the Brule, the Pine, and the Popple – flow in that direction and are part of the Menominee River watershed. Both the Pine and Popple Rivers are designated as "wild" under the Wisconsin Wild River Act (Ch. 30.26 WI Stats.).

The Peshtigo River and its feeder streams encompass the largest watershed in the county. This river flows to the southeast and enters Green Bay in southeastern Marinette County. The Wolf River, whose headwaters originate at Pine Lake, flows southward into Lake Poygan in Winnebago County. Several small streams on the far western edge of the county flow to the west and are part of the Wisconsin River watershed.

The secondary drainage system in Forest County consists mainly of surface runoff and hillside seepage into basins and depressions caused by the last glacial period. Some of these areas have drainage outlets, but most of this system tends to be poorly developed.

This extensive water resource provides a great deal of recreational opportunity like boating, sailing, skiing, fishing, swimming, canoeing and ice fishing.

## Groundwater

Glacial drift aquifers are the major source of ground water in most of the county. Large yields of ground water are available where the thickness of the saturated drift is at least 50 feet. The thickness of the glacial drift over most of the county ranges up to about 300 feet. The glacial drift produces well yields ranging from 5 to 1,000 gallons per minute. Yields of at least 500 gallons per minute are common. Most high-capacity wells range from 30 to 300 feet in depth.

Precambrian crystalline rock underlying the county is not considered a significant source of water. The availability of water from the bedrock is difficult to predict and is probably less than 5 gallons per minute. The glacial drift aquifer above the bedrock is the best source of ground water.

The quality of ground water in Forest County is generally good. The ground water is suitable for most domestic, municipal, and industrial uses, but treatment may be required for special purposes. The water in the aquifers is principally a calcium magnesium bicarbonate type. It is moderately hard or hard. A high content of iron is a problem in many wells, but it is not a health hazard. Local differences in the quality of ground water are a result of the composition, solubility, and surface area

of soil and rock particles through which the water moves and the length of time the water is in contact with these materials. The least mineralized water is from the glacial drift aquifer.

### Soils

Most of the soils in Forest County formed under forest vegetation, which results in a light-colored soil that has a relatively low content of organic matter.

The parent material of the soils in Forest County varies greatly, sometimes within small areas, depending on how the material was deposited. The parent materials in Forest County are mainly glacial till or glacial mudflow sediment, glacial outwash, and lacustrine deposits, which in places are covered by a thin layer of silty or loamy windblown material. Some of the soils formed in more recent deposits of organic material or alluvium.

Soil properties are important considerations when planning and developing recreation facilities. To help evaluate soils, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service publishes a Soil Survey Report. The Forest County Soil Survey Report was made available in 2003. Soil suitability tables for outdoor recreation and other uses are available on the Internet.

Soil surveys contain an abundance of information on appropriate site planning in respect to soil suitability and developmental properties by soil type. The soil types identified are to be evaluated for a wide range of recreational uses including the following:

- wetland refuges for waterfowl
- wildlife management
- open space or nature study areas
- parks
- athletic fields
- designated farmland preservation areas
- ski areas
- golf courses
- campsites, hiking trails, and picnic areas
- woodlands
- hunting preserves
- manmade ponds

### Climate

Winters in Forest County are very cold, and the short summers are fairly warm. The short frost-free period during the summer limits cropping mainly to forage crops, small grain, and adapted vegetables. Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year but reaches a peak in summer. Snow covers the ground much of the time from late fall through early spring. The total annual precipitation is about 30 inches. Of this total, more than 21 inches, or about 70 percent, usually falls in April through September. The growing season for most crops falls within this period. In 2 years out of 10, the rainfall in April through September is less than 18 inches. The sun shines 65 percent of the time possible in summer and 45 percent in winter. The prevailing wind is from the northwest. Average wind speed is highest, 12 miles per hour, in spring.

## **SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Introduction**

This section describes the social and economic factors that shape Forest County. This type of information can give a general feeling of how trends in recreational needs might be changing, because the residents are changing. Developing an understanding of these characteristics and their changes will help direct future planning efforts in the appropriate directions.

Overall recreation demand within Wisconsin is described under SCORP in Chapter 4 – Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment – of this plan. Matching social characteristics from this section with different recreation demands as shown in SCORP Chapter 2, will start to reinforce what recreational facilities to provide.

### **Population**

Current population, seasonal population estimates, population projections, and public participation results are all important criteria to use when considering the supply of recreational facilities. This section lists and describes the current, seasonal, and projected population levels for county and neighborhood park facility demands.

The relationship between population demographics, and supply & demand of recreational facilities is only a bare minimum guide for developing outdoor recreational facilities in Forest County. Understanding how each park is used, and if specific activities are in demand are better factors to use when determining future recreational facility needs. Combining population demographics from this section with public participation feedback (results are shown in the Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment chapter) will provide a complete understanding of outdoor recreational facility needs.

Both permanent and seasonal residents must be counted when considering outdoor recreation facilities. Seasonal residents pay the same amount of property taxes as residents, but the only services they pay for and do not use are the school districts.

The 2010 United States Census also indicates that Forest County has an older population. The county median age of 44.1 years is older than Wisconsin's median age of 38.5. Forest County also has 20.3% of its population 65 years or older which is a higher percentage than Wisconsin who has 13.7% of its residents 65 years or older. The fact that Forest County has an older population needs to be considered with all public investments, including recreational facilities.

Table 1	Permanent and Seasonal Population by Forest County Municipality								
	Community	2000 Population			2010 Population			Total Pop. Change	Percent Change
		Seasonal Pop.	Permanent Pop	Total Pop.	Seasonal Pop.	Permanent Pop	Total Pop.		
Alvin	572	186	758	714	157	871	113	14.9%	
Argonne	274	532	806	458	512	970	164	20.3%	
Armstrong Creek	412	463	875	624	409	1,033	158	18.1%	
Blackwell	152	347	499	315	332	647	148	29.7%	
Caswell	261	102	363	231	91	322	-41	-11.3%	
Crandon (Town)	454	614	1,068	394	650	1,044	-24	-2.2%	
Freedom	633	376	1,009	718	345	1,063	54	5.4%	
Hiles	1,041	404	1,445	1,196	311	1,507	62	4.3%	
Laona	545	1,367	1,912	626	1,212	1,838	-74	-3.9%	
Lincoln	1,429	1,005	2,434	1,630	955	2,585	151	6.2%	
Nashville	1,738	1,157	2,895	2,156	1,064	3,220	325	11.2%	
Popple River	193	79	272	227	44	271	-1	-0.4%	
Ross	314	167	481	336	136	472	-9	-1.9%	
Wabeno	752	1,264	2,016	721	1,166	1,887	-129	-6.4%	
Crandon (City)	229	1,961	2,190	238	1,920	2,158	-32	-1.5%	
Forest County	8,999	10,024	19,023	10,346	9,304	19,650	627	3.3%	

Source: U.S. Census & NCWRPC

Table 1 shows historical permanent and estimated seasonal populations for Forest County municipalities. Seasonal populations were calculated from U.S. Census data. The number of seasonal housing units was multiplied by the average household size of the permanently occupied housing units in that municipality.

There is a clear pattern county-wide between the seasonal and permanent population changes in Table 1. Between 2000 and 2010 Table 1 shows that each community except of the Town of Crandon experienced a loss in Permanent population. Table 1 also shows that each community except the Towns of Caswell, Crandon and Wabeno experienced growth in seasonal population. The growth of the seasonal population outpaced the decline of the permanent population which results in a population increase of 3.3%.

Table 2	Population Projections by Forest County Municipality						
	Census 2010	2015 Projection	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Alvin	157	206	209	211	211	54	34.4%
Argonne	512	587	596	600	599	87	17.0%
Armstrong Creek	409	456	447	436	421	12	2.9%
Blackwell	332	305	290	273	255	-77	-23.2%
Caswell	91	96	94	92	89	-2	-2.2%
Crandon (Town)	650	641	644	642	637	-13	-2.0%
Freedom	345	416	426	433	436	91	26.4%
Hiles	311	439	448	454	456	145	46.6%
Laona	1212	1315	1279	1238	1189	-23	-1.9%
Lincoln	955	1145	1195	1234	1261	306	32.0%
Nashville	1064	1301	1345	1379	1399	335	31.5%
Popple River	44	108	114	118	122	78	177.3%
Ross	136	161	158	152	146	10	7.4%
Wabeno	1166	1335	1348	1351	1343	177	15.2%
Crandon (City)	1920	1909	1870	1820	1759	-161	-8.4%
Forest County	9,304	10,420	10,463	10,433	10,323	1,019	11.0%

Source: Wisconsin DOA & U.S. Census

Over the 20 year period shown in Table 2 the Wisconsin Department of Administration projects the county population to increase by 11.0%. The Towns of Blackwell, Caswell, Crandon, and Laona and the City of Crandon are projected to experience population losses over the next 20 years. The remaining communities in Forest County are projected to experience population increases over the next 20 years. The Towns of Lincoln and Nashville are projected to gain over 300 people each, with the Towns of Wabeno and Hiles projected to gain over 140 people over this time period. The Wisconsin Department of Administration completed these population projections before the 2010 census numbers were completed. They will complete new projections in 2012 which will reflect the 2010 census numbers and the population decrease experienced by Forest County.

Insert Map 3 – Outdoor Recreation

Insert Map 4 – City of Crandon Outdoor Recreation

Insert Map 5 – Town of Laona Outdoor Recreation

Insert Map 6 – Town of Wabeno Outdoor Recreation

## CHAPTER 3 EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES

### INTRODUCTION

This section is an inventory of the existing outdoor recreational facilities in Forest County, which will focus primarily upon public facilities. Some private facilities will be listed for reference purposes. The private sector provides many recreational opportunities but this plan's purpose is to identify public facility improvements that may qualify for state and federal money.

Intensively used outdoor recreation facilities are generally located near population concentrations like the City of Crandon, the school district properties, and town centers. In towns with low population densities and relatively low real estate valuation, there typically are no local outdoor recreation facilities. Since there are abundant outdoor recreation facilities located within Chequamegon – Nicolet National Forest, then there is less demand for local governments to provide those similar types of facilities.

Existing recreation facilities are grouped under the following headings: Linear Facilities; Public Access Points to Water Bodies; Public Campgrounds, Points Of Interest; County Forest; City and Town Facilities; School District Facilities; State Facilities; Forested Lands – Not State or County Owned; Federal Facilities that are not already listed; and Private Outdoor Recreation Facilities.

### TRAIL FACILITIES

Each listing has a *title in italics* and a (#). The (#) represents the location on Map 3.

#### Non-Motorized Trails

##### ***Forest County Forestry Department***

- *Hemlock Lake Trail* (1)– located one mile east and four miles south of Crandon off Hwy W on Hemlock Lake Road. Two miles of gentle and intermediate cross-country trails and parking are available.
- *Otter Springs Skiing and Hiking Trail* (2)– located four miles east of Crandon on Otter Spring Road/Forest Road 2378. Trails for hiking, cross-country skiing, and mountain biking include a 1 1/4 mile loop, 3/4 mile loop for beginners, and an intermediate 3 mile loop. All trails are well groomed and marked. There is also a ski shelter, benches, and fire pit.
- *Bradley Lake Trail* (3) – There are three different trail sections to this system. One is located one mile south of Potowatomi Trail Road. Another is west of Lake Lucerne off Duff Road. This section includes the ATV trails (see ATV Trails of this section). The other is located west of County W on the west and east sides of Bradley Lake Road. These 12 miles of trails are used primarily for hunting and hiking.

### ***Chequamegon – Nicolet National Forest***

In addition to designated trails, all logging roads and undesignated/unmarked trails within the Nicolet National Forest are open to non-motorized public use unless otherwise posted.

- *Ed's Lake Trail* (4)– located on County Highway W between Wabeno and Crandon. Cross county ski trails include a 2.3 mile loop for beginners, and a 2.7 mile loop or 3.5 mile loop for intermediate skiers. All trails are groomed. There are also 6 miles of hiking and mountain biking trails in upland hardwoods.
- *Nicolet North Trail* (5)– located 10.5 miles east of Eagle River on Forest Road 2460 to the trailhead. Cross-country ski trails include 13 miles of groomed trails with several loop options. In the summer months, these trails can be used for hiking and mountain biking. The Nicolet North Trail connects with the Anvil Trail.
- *Franklin Nature Lake Trail* (7)– located 9 miles east of Eagle River on Forest Road 2181 to the campground and trailhead. This is a one mile interpretive loop trail that takes you through a tamarack swamp, hemlock cathedral, and 300-year old white pines.
- *Hidden Lakes Trail* (8)– this is a thirteen mile trail which begins at Franklin Nature Lake Trail and eventually joins the Luna-White Deer Trail.
- *Knowles Creek Interpretive Trail* (9)– located 9.5 miles east of Wabeno on Forest Road 3132. This is a one-third mile access interpretive trail which follows the north shore of North Creek impoundment. This is also a state designated Wildlife viewing area.
- *Halley Creek Bird Trail* (10)– located five miles east of Blackwell on Forest Road 2103. It is a one mile loop trail with bird viewing opportunities in four different habitat types.
- *Michigan Rapids Trail* (11)– located 3 miles north of Laona on Forest Road 2134. This is a two mile hike along the Peshtigo River to the rapids.
- *Argonne Forest Trail* (12)–located 1.5 miles east of Hiles on Forest Road 2184. A self-guided loop trail gives a hiker a chance to learn more about the northern hardwoods and forest management. The trail features 17 stops along a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile path.
- *Scott Lake Trail and Shelp Lake Trail* (13)– located on Forest Road 2183. The one-third mile Scott Lake Trail is located on the south side of 2183. The boardwalk to Shelp Lake is located on the north side of 2183. This walk will take you out over a floating bog.
- *Luna-White Deer Trail* (14) – located off Divide Road to the Luna-White Deer Lake campground and trailhead. Hikers can park either at the White Pine swimming area or the boat ramp on Luna Lake.
- *Sevenmile Trail* (15) – located seven and a half miles north of Hiles off Forest Road 2435 to Seven-Mile Lake Campground and trailhead.
- *Giant Pine Trail* (16) – located two miles north of Hiles on off Forest Road 2414 to the trailhead. This is a 1.5 mile loop in the Headwaters Wilderness where white pines overtop the hardwood forest.
- *Bailey Lake Equestrian Trail* (17) – trailhead is located off of Forest Road 3861. This trail is approximately 12 miles used as a designated horse trail. In the winter, parts of the trail are used for snowmobiling.
- *Quartz Hill Trail* (18) – located in the southeast corner of Forest County. From Carter, take State Highway 32 south 1 mile. The parking area is on the west side of the highway. This trail has two sections; one on the east and a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile trail on the west side of State Highway 32. The east section leads across a boardwalk to the top of Quartz Hill.

Table 3		Trail Uses						
County Trails	Miles	Hiking	Mtn. Bike	X-C Ski	Horse	Interpretive	Difficulty	
Hemlock Lake Trail	2	X	X	X			Easy	
Otter Springs Trail	5	X	X	X	X		Easy - Moderate	
Bradley Lake Trail	12	X	X	X	X		Easy	
Nicolet Nat'l Trails	Miles	Hiking	Mtn. Bike	X-C Ski	Horse	Interpretive	Difficulty	
Ed's Lake Trail	6	X	X	X			Easy - Difficult	
Nicolet North Trail	15	X	X	X	X		Medium	
Franklin Nature Lake	1	X				X	Easy	
Hidden Lakes Trail	13	X					Medium	
Knowles Creek Interpretive Trail	2/3	X				X	Easy	
Halley Creek Bird Trail	1	X				X	Easy	
Michigan Rapids Trail	2	X					Medium	
Argonne Experimental Forest Trail	3/4	X				X	Medium	
Scott Lake Trail and Shelp Lake Trail	1/2	X					Easy	
Luna-White Deer Trail	4	X					Easy	
Sevenmile Trail	2	X					Medium	
Giant Pine Trail								
Bailey Lake Equestrian Trail	15	X			X		Easy	
Quartz Hill Trail	1 1/4	X				X	Medium- Difficult	

Source: USDA – Forest Service, & Forest County Forestry Department

### ATV Trails

#### ***Forest County Forestry Department***

A two-way, 8-mile trail (19) is located on old logging roads and is also open to motorcycles, snowmobiles, hikers, skiers, loggers, and many other users. A loading dock is available at the trailhead parking area. Also available to the public are picnic areas. Many towns in Forest County have opened their town roads for ATV use as well. Please be sure that town roads are signed with "ATV Route" signs before riding your ATV on them.

#### ***Nicolet State Trail***

The Nicolet State Trail is 25 miles of State funded snowmobile and ATV trail on abandoned railroad grade. The southern section starts at the Forest/Oconto County line in the Town of Carter and proceeds 12 miles north to the Town of Laona. The northern section starts at CTH O in the Town of Cavour and proceeds 13 miles north to the Forest/Florence County line, then continues through Florence County and connects with a railroad corridor in Upper Michigan.

### ***Wolf River State Trail***

The Wolf River State Trail is open in Forest County and runs for 13.6 miles from the Forest/Langlade county line to Crandon. The trail is currently under development in Langlade County. The trail will be developed in phases, in part dependent on funding. Once complete, the Wolf River State Trail in Langlade County will run for 23.4 miles and begin at the Menominee/Langlade county line, travel north through White Lake, Hollister and Lily and connect to the trail in Forest County for a total of 37 miles.

Only use roads that are legally marked as ATV routes to leave the corridor. The Nicolet State and Wolf River State Trails are the only trails in Forest County that are currently open to both snowmobile and ATV. No other snowmobile trail in Forest County is open to ATV use at this time.

### ***Chequamegon – Nicolet National Forest (Forest)***

In 2004, the Forest revised its forest management plan. The revised plan contains a consistent ATV policy for both sides of the Forest:

- No off-road or off trail use allowed (implemented on June 14, 2004).
- New trail construction allowed for up to 100 miles of trail on the Chequamegon side, and up to 85 total miles on the Nicolet side. The Nicolet side covers Forest County.
- All roads and trails closed to ATV use unless posted open with signs.
- All trails and Forest Service roads will be closed to ATV's every year from March 15 through April 30. Township designated roads are still open.
- No Intensive Use ("play areas") allowed on the Forest.
- Emergency closures can be issued locally where resources are being damaged or abused, or there are safety concerns.

All Forest Service roads open to ATV use will be posted with signs. Also, maps containing information on areas open to ATV use can also be obtained at Ranger District Offices.

### Snowmobile Trails

Forest County has about 405.8 miles of groomed, state funded trails winding throughout the county. All trails link to both casinos and many hospitality businesses in Forest County. All trail maintenance is contracted to snowmobile clubs. The trail segments that exist within the County include:

- *100 Mile Snow Safari Trails* – 148.7 miles
- *Lumberjack Memorial Trails* – 94.1 miles
- *Three Lakes Trails* – 90 miles
- *Tombstone-Pickeral Trails* – 23.6 miles
- *Black Bear Sportsmen's Club* – 49.4 miles

### Water Trails

A water trail is a network of access points, resting places, and attractions for users of water craft on lakes and rivers. This website can help with creating a trail: (<http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexplakes/publications/watertrails/>). There are over 317 streams

and rivers providing canoeists 710 miles of routes.

All navigable water is available to canoe on according to the Public Trust Doctrine (Art. 1, §1, WI Constitution). Wisconsin law recognizes that owners of lands bordering lakes and rivers - "riparian" owners - hold rights in the water next to their property. These riparian rights include the use of the shoreline, reasonable use of the water, and a right to access the water. Members of the public may use any exposed shore area of a stream without the permission of the riparian (i.e., landowner) only if it is necessary to exit the body of water to bypass an obstruction. In addition, a member of the public may not enter the exposed shore area except from the water, from a point of public access on the stream, or with the permission of the riparian landowner. Obstructions could consist of trees or rocks, shallow water for boaters or deep water for wading trout anglers. The bypass can involve areas up to the ordinary high water mark and should be by the shortest possible route. Under this law, using the exposed shoreline for purposes such as picnicking and sunbathing is not allowed (Ch. 30.134, WI Stats.).

- *Brule River* – one route with a length of 18 miles (Brule Dam – STH 139 bridge).
- *Peshigo River* – four routes with different lengths: 7.5 miles (Big Joe Canoe Landing – CCC Bridge), 9.5 miles (CCC Bridge – Burnt Bridge), 5.75 miles (Burnt Bridge - Burton Wells), and 6.25 miles (Burton Wells – Goodman Park).
- *Pine River* – Two routes: 20 miles (FS Road 2182 near Haystack Corners – FS Road 2168) and 18 miles (FS Road – Chipmunk Rapids)
- *Popple River* – One route (Hwy 55 ten miles north of Argonne – Town of Popple River).
- *Wolf River* – Two routes: 10 miles (Pine Lake – Little Rice Lake Dam), and 15 miles (Little Rice Dam – Hwy B Bridge).

### Rustic Road

Forest County has one rustic road. Rustic Road 34 is a combination of Fishel Rd, Cary Dam Rd, and Lakeview Dr near the intersection of STHs 70 and 55.

### Auto Tours

Two driving tours exist within the Chequamegon – Nicolet National Forest. The Eagle River Self-Guided Natural History Auto Tour is an 80 mile auto tour that starts in Eagle River, travels through Oneida, Forest, and Vilas counties, and ends in Three Lakes. The Lakewood Auto Tour is a 65 mile auto tour in the south part of Forest County.

## **PUBLIC ACCESS POINTS TO WATER BODIES**

Public Access sites on Forest County's lakes and streams are catalogued in the *Forest County Visitors Guide* under lakes and streams. Public access to waterbodies is ensured when land subdivision occurs by state statute. See the Implementation Strategies chapter for more details. Forest County and the City of Crandon each have one access point on Lake Metonga. All other access points in Forest County are maintained by the towns or USDA Forest Service.

## PUBLIC CAMPGROUNDS

Each listing has a *title in italics* and a (#). The (#) represents the location on Map 3.

### Forest County

- *Forest County Veteran's Memorial Park* (20)– 10 tent and 55 trailer spaces, electric hookups, dump station for RV's, one disabled accessible campsite, drinking water, sanitary facilities meeting ADA standards, beachhouse/restroom/shower facility, picnic facilities, two picnic shelters, grills, playground, horseshoe pits, volleyball courts, basketball court, swimming beach, boating, boat landing, fishing, fishing pier, and a manager present.

### Tribally Owned

- *Sokaogon Chippewa Community Park* (21) - 20 tent and trailer spaces, drinking water, picnic facilities, boating, boat landing, and fishing.

### Chequamegon – Nicolet National Forest

- *Big Joe* (22)– 3 primitive sites – picnic table, fire rings, and vault toilets.
- *Bear Lake* (23)– 27 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, picnic facilities, grills, hiking, swimming, boating, boat landing, and fishing.
- *Brule River* (24)– 11 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, grills, fishing, and grocery store.
- *Franklin Lake* (25)– 77 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, flush toilets, picnic facilities, shelter, grills, hiking, swimming, boating, boat landing, and fishing.
- *Laura Lake* (27)– 41 tent and trailer space – drinking water, picnic facilities, grills, hiking, swimming, non-motorized boat restrictions, a five mile bike trail, boat landing, and fishing.
- *Luna-White Deer Lake* (28) – 37 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, picnic facilities, grills, hiking, non-motorized boat restrictions, swimming, boat landing, and fishing.
- *Pine Lake* (29)– 12 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, picnic facilities, grills, swimming, boating, boat landing, and fishing.
- *Richardson Lake* (30)– 26 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, picnic facilities, grills, swimming, boat landing, boating, and fishing.
- *Seven Mile Lake* (31)– 27 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, grills, hiking, swimming, boating, boat landing, and fishing.
- *Stevens Lake* (32)– 6 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, grills, boat landing, boating, and fishing.
- *Windsor Dam* (33) – 8 tent and trailer spaces – drinking water, grills, hiking, canoeing, and fishing.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

Forest County contains both historic and contemporary points of interest of cultural, aesthetic, recreational, and scientific importance.

### Historic Buildings and Sites

Five sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Forest County:

1. Camp Five Farmstead, Town of Laona
2. Chicago and Northwestern Land Office, Town of Wabeno
3. Dinesen – Motzfeldt – Hettinger Log House, Town of Crandon
4. Franklin Lake Campground, Town of Alvin
5. Otter Spring House, Town of Lincoln

Wisconsin's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) lists 10 properties on it, all within the City of Crandon:

1. Crandon Ranger Station
2. Crandon Creamery
3. Crandon Grade School
4. Methodist Episcopal Church
5. Crandon State Bank
6. M. D. Keith House
7. Forest County Courthouse
8. Crandon Theater
9. Page and Landeck Lumber Co
10. Crandon Post Office

The Forest County Historical and Genealogical Society maintains extensive county historical records that are available to the general public.

### Historical Marker

A state historical marker titled: **Northern Highland** is located on USH 8, 1.8 miles east of Crandon.

A state historical marker titled: **Battle of Mole Lake** is located on STH 55, in the center of Mole Lake.

A state historical marker titled: **Laona School Forest** is located on STH 32, 1 mile south of Laona.

### Geologic Site

Forest County's topography, and geology are described on page 6 in Chapter 2 – Description of Forest County.

*Sugar Bush Hill* (34) – Located three miles east of Crandon, this is one of the highest points in the State at 1,938 feet above sea level. This site is tribally owned.

## **COUNTY FOREST**

The Forest County Forestry and Recreation Department manages 11,578 acres of county forest. This land is managed for multiple uses, and is independently certified as sustainably managed and harvested. Some of the county forest is closed to motorized vehicles. Examples of permitted recreational activities are hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, camping, bough cutting (permit required), firewood collection (permit required), and wildlife observation. Refer to Map 3 for Forest County Forest Land.

## **CITY and TOWN FACILITIES**

### City of Crandon

Each listing has a *title in italics* and a (#). The (#) represents the location on Map 4. Recreational opportunities that exist in the City of Crandon include:

- *City Beach* (1) – The beach is located on Lake Metonga’s north shore, on the city’s south side. Facilities include a beach house, two boat launches with a pier at each, picnic area, playground, sanitary facilities, shelter, swimming, and volleyball courts.
- *Palmer Park* (2) – This park is located next to City Hall on the west side of city. Facilities include a small ice skating rink, a little league and softball field, basketball court, play equipment with safety surfacing, sanitary facility, and a 0.6-mile bike path.
- *Peshigo Lake* (3) – A recently improved boat landing is the only recreation facility at this location at this time
- *Cardinal Park* (4) – This park has two little league fields, basketball courts, volleyball courts, two tennis courts, an ice rink with a warming house, playground, sanitary facility, two shelters, and hiking/nature/fitness trail.
- *Park Louise* (5) – This park is located on the north side of the city.
- *New Hope Christian School* (7) – Facilities include a playground, track, and field for soccer, football, and other activities.
- *Forest County Fairgrounds (City of Crandon)* (8)– Facilities include three buildings for displays, animal barn, horse arena, and sanitary facility.

## Town Facilities

Various towns throughout Forest County maintain the following recreational facilities:

- *Argonne Town Park* (Map 3) – facilities include two ball fields, a covered pavilion that meets ADA standards, sanitary facilities, and a basketball court
- *Armstrong Creek Town Park* (Map 3) – facilities include a pavilion (meets ADA standards) with picnic tables, playground equipment, basketball court, and sanitary facilities.
- *Buchanan Recreation Area (Town of Alvin)* – facilities include shelter/storage, horseshoe pit, volleyball court, basketball, playground equipment, and nature trail
- *Town of Blackwell Park* (Map 3) – facilities include the baseball/softball field, tennis court, and sanitary facility. Facilities at the Rat River location include a picnic area and sanitary facility. These facilities do not meet ADA standards.
- *Monte's Playground (Town of Blackwell)* (Map 3) – facilities include a playground, shelter, and 2 picnic tables. This land is approximately one acre and is adjacent to the Town Hall. These facilities do not meet ADA standards.
- *Silver Lake Park (Town of Laona)* (Map 5, #1) – facilities include a swimming beach, basketball court, two shelters with picnic tables, volleyball court, sanitary facility, benches, and grills.
- *Laona Town Park* (Map 5, #2) – facilities include a picnic area and ice-skating area.
- *Town of Ross Park* (Map 3)– facilities include a baseball/softball field and a playground area.
- *Lake Van Zile Community Park* (Town of Ross) (Map 3)– facilities include a boat access, picnic area, sanitary facility, and swimming beach.
- *Wabeno Neighborhood Park* (Map 6, #1)– facilities include sanitary facilities meeting ADA standards, a fishing area, picnic area, playground, two shelters (meet ADA standards), new playground equipment, tennis court, and volleyball court. The town has also recently installed lighting at the park.
- *Trump Lake Park* (Town of Wabeno) (Map 6, #3)– facilities include a boat access, picnic area, sanitary facility, shelter, and swimming beach.
- *Wabeno Fairgrounds* (Town of Wabeno) (Map 6, #2)– facilities include a shelter.

## SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES

Recreational opportunities in Forest County that are maintained by public schools.

*Crandon School District* (Map 4, #6) – Facilities include a baseball/softball field, football field, playground, shelter, ice skating rink, and hiking/nature/fitness trail.

- Crandon School Forest, 10 acres, E1/2 NE1/4, S25 T36N R12E;
- Hovind Family School Forest, 40 acres, SE1/4 SE1/4, S28 T36N R12E;

*Laona School District* (Map 5, #3)– Facilities include a baseball field, football field, and two tennis courts on the east side. The west side of the school provides playground equipment and basketball courts.

- Laona School Forest, 63 acres, N1/2 NW1/4, S6 T35N R15E;

*Wabeno School District* (Map 6, #4)– Facilities include a baseball/softball field, football field, sanitary facility, shelter, ice skating area, and sledding.

- Wabeno School Forest, 40 acres, SE1/4 SW1/4, S16 T34N R15E.

## STATE FACILITIES

Each listing has a *title* and a (#). The (#) represents the location on Map 3.

### State Wildlife Areas

State wildlife areas were acquired by the state to protect and manage important habitat for wildlife and to preserve unique wild land features for hikers, wildlife watchers, hunters, trappers, and all people interested in the out-of-doors. Wildlife areas have only minor facility development like a very small gravel parking lot.

The following wildlife areas are owned by the State of Wisconsin and managed by the Department of Natural Resources. There is one federal wildlife area in Forest County:

***Little Rice Wildlife Area*** (35) located 6 miles northwest of Crandon, is a public hunting area that consists of 1,757 acres. Waterfowl, furbearers, deer, loons, bald eagles, and osprey inhabit the area.

### State Natural Areas (SNA)

State natural areas were acquired to protect the state's natural diversity, provide sites for research and environmental education, and serve as benchmarks for assessing and guiding use of other lands in the state. Natural areas are defined as tracts of land or water, which have native biotic communities, unique natural features, or significant geological or archeological sites. These sites do not have much facility development, though there may be a designated trail on the site.

The restrictions and guidelines that follow are applicable to most SNAs, though sites owned by agencies and organizations other than the DNR may have additional rules.

- Most SNAs are open to the public year around unless otherwise noted in the SNA site descriptions or posted at the site. SNAs within State Parks are generally open between 6:00 A.M. and 11:00 P.M.
- Please recognize and respect the property of private landowners adjacent to SNAs by not trespassing. Seek the landowner's permission before crossing private lands.
- Do not collect plants (including fruits, nuts, or edible plant parts), animals, fungi, rocks, minerals, fossils, archaeological artifacts, soil, downed wood, or any other natural material, alive or dead. Collecting for scientific research requires a permit issued by the DNR.
- Vehicles, including bicycles, ATVs, aircraft, and snowmobiles, are prohibited except on trails and roadways designated for their use. Access is only by foot, skis, snowshoes, and watercraft. Some trails are wheelchair accessible.
- Pets are allowed on most DNR-owned SNAs, but must be kept on a leash no longer than 8', unless they are dogs being used for hunting purposes. Pets are prohibited on sites owned by The Nature Conservancy and most other private conservation organizations. Horseback riding is not allowed.
- Camping and fires are generally prohibited.
- Rock climbing and rappelling are prohibited, except on SNAs #98 and #164.
- Fishing, trapping, and hunting are allowed on most DNR-owned properties in accordance with state regulations.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) listed six areas within Forest County. Each site was given a statewide identification (**No. #**) by the DNR, and a Map 3 location letter [**\_**]:

1. **Scott Lake and Shelp Lake SNA (No. 117) [A]** is 272 acres located in the Town of Hiles (T38N R12E).
2. **Giant White Pine Grove SNA (No. 118) [B]** is 30 acres located in the Town of Hiles (T38N R12E)
3. **Bose Lake Hemlock-Hardwoods SNA (No. 119) [C]** is 25 acres located in the Town of Hiles (T40N R 12E).
4. **Atkins Lake SNA (No. 238) [D]** is 541 acres located in the Town of Hiles (T37N R11E).
5. **Bastile Lake SNA (No. 302) [E]** is 156 acres located in the Town of Popple River.
6. **McCaslin Mountain SNA (No. 307) [F]** is 408 acres located in the Town of Wabeno (T34N R16E).

Wilderness Areas are the federal version of the state natural areas program. Each listing has a **title** and a (#). The (#) represents the location on Map 3.

**Headwaters Wilderness Area (36)** – Officially designated as a wilderness in 1984, this 18,000 plus acre wilderness is located 16 miles southeast of Eagle River, Wis. in Forest County. Portions of this area contain some of the largest and oldest trees in the forest. Kimball Creek, Shelp Lake and the Headwaters of the Pine River are major features within this Wilderness. The terrain is generally flat. Popular recreation uses in this Wilderness are hiking, bird-watching, hunting, fishing and studying nature.

## **FORESTED LANDS – NOT STATE or COUNTY OWNED**

The forested lands in Forest County are comprised of county forest, state lands, and private lands held by individuals and corporations. Most corporate lands are enrolled in either the Forest Crop Law or the Managed Forest Law. Currently, lands can only be enrolled in Managed Forest Law.

Under the Forest Crop Law (FCL) 4,544 acres are open to the public to hunt and fish as of 2009. There are 101,585 acres enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program that are open to the public for hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, sightseeing, and hiking, and 26,726 acres that are closed to public access. All MFL program participants can restrict access without penalty to the landowner to areas that are within 300 feet of any building or harvesting operation. Snowmobiles, ATVs, bicycles, and other motorized and non-motorized vehicles are prohibited on enrolled lands that are open to the public.

Contact the WDNR to find what land is available to the public for the recreational purposes of hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing, and sightseeing.

## **FEDERAL FACILITIES**

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest covers over half the land within Forest County. Extensive recreational opportunities within the Forest are described throughout the Existing Recreation System chapter.

## **PRIVATE OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES**

Crandon International Off-Road Raceway – This 1.7-mile course is located on Highway 8 just one mile west of Crandon. Every Labor Day weekend, the raceway is used for the World Championship Off-Road Races, along with the Brush Run 101 held every year on the third weekend in June. Crowds can swell to over 60,000 people in one day of these events.

There is one private golf course in Forest County that is open to the public for a fee.

There are approximately 10 private campgrounds totaling 291 campsites in Forest County. All of these campgrounds are available for a fee to the public.

# CHAPTER 4

## OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### INTRODUCTION

Recreational needs within the county were identified by collecting public input, creating a county facility assessment, and reviewing past plans – including the Wisconsin SCORP 2005-2010.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROJECTS COMPLETED FROM 2007-2011

#### Forest County

##### **Veterans Memorial Park**

1. Trees – Continue the tree-planting program
2. Pavilion Construction
3. Fire Rings – Continue to purchase fire rings for campsites for cooking and campfires.
4. Park Expansion – Consider development of 25 additional campsites within the existing campground and/or expand into the wooded area adjacent to the existing campground.
5. Pit Toilets – Replace four existing pit toilets with modern, ADA accessible facilities. (Completed)
6. Parking Areas – Increase size of parking areas. Stripe and organize existing parking areas to serve more vehicles. (Completed)
7. Borders/Fences – Replace existing fences and borders with boulders (maintenance free and aesthetically pleasing). (Completed)
8. Electric Service Pedestals – Upgrade existing power pedestals to each campsite for camper safety. Add additional power pedestals for expansion and high use occupancy. (Completed)
9. Playground Equipment – Add ADA accessible playground equipment and upgrade existing playground structures. (Completed)
10. Boat Parking – Designate an area adjacent to the tent camping area for parking and mooring boats and canoes.

#### City of Crandon

- Create a skate park at Palmer Park.
- Create freestyle BMX bicycle track at Palmer Park.
- Install new sport coating on tennis and basketball courts.

#### Town of Armstrong Creek

- Install new playground equipment at Armstrong Creek Park.
- Upgrade restrooms with ADA modifications.

#### Town of Alvin

- Shuffle Board Court (Completed)

#### Town of Argonne

- Built 10 Picnic Tables (Completed)

#### Town of Blackwell

- Rebuilt gazebo in Town of Blackwell Park. (Completed)
- Resurface and stripe tennis courts in Town of Blackwell Park.

#### Town of Hiles

- Promote bird watching trails.

#### Town of Popple River

Purchased two picnic tables for Bastil Lake (Completed)

Purchased Flail mower for mowing trails (Completed)

Made gravel parking lots at trailheads (Completed)

#### Town of Nashville

- Completed a bicycle and pedestrian lane on Pickerel Lake Road. (Completed)

#### Town of Wabeno

##### Trump Lake Park Improvements

- Improve drainage and beautification of beach. (Completed)
- Install trash and recycling cans, and benches. (Completed)
- Resurface tennis court. (Completed)
- Replace roof at boat landing pavilion.
- Construct new shelter for phoenix steam hauler and log shed. (Completed)
- Purchase playground equipment. (Completed)
- Develop a new toilet at the beach. (Completed)
- Purchase picnic tables. (Completed)

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Informal Public Input

In the regular course of business, Forest County Forestry, Land, and Parks Department staff have received public input about its parks, and forests.

### Summary of City Council and Town Board Survey Responses

Surveys were received from Towns of Alvin, Argonne, Blackwell, Crandon (Town), Nashville, Popple River, and Wabeno. Survey responses are grouped under the headings below. The Towns of Alvin and Nashville did not list any concerns in all categories.

#### Top Outdoor Recreation Issues facing Forest County

Each "X" represents 1 community agreeing that it is an issue.

Availability	X
Affordability	X
Promotion	X
Economy	X
ATV Trails and Accessibility	XXX
Facilities	X
Hunting Issues	X
Invasive Species at Lakes	X
Cooperation with USFS	X

#### How to Satisfy Forest County Outdoor Recreational Issues

More Donations, Fundraisers and Grants  
More Community Recreational Facilities  
Market and Promote the use of existing facilities and the counties recreational assets  
Continue to pursue development of a trail system

#### What Existing outdoor Recreation Facilities in Forest County Need Improvement

Lack of ATV Trail system  
Camping sites on Bastil Lake  
Walking Trails off of the Nicolet Trail

Each community described what outdoor recreational issues face their community, and how they plan to satisfy those issues.

#### Town of Blackwell

Top 3 Outdoor Recreation Issues:

1. USFS is not maintaining campsites
2. USFS is slow to respond to the development of a trail
3. Little to attract recreation at this time.

How to satisfy local issues:

- Continue to attempt to work with Forest Service.

#### Town of Crandon

Top 3 Outdoor Recreation Issues:

1. ATV Trails.
2. Boat Landings

How to satisfy local issues:

- Identify grants to develop ATV trails
- Improve Boat Landings

#### Town of Nashville

Top 3 Outdoor Recreation Issues:

1. Lack of Rest rooms at boat landings
2. Improve pads and parking at boat landings
3. Create town park

How to satisfy local issues:

- Build Restrooms at boat landing
- Rebuild launches and increase parking at landings
- Create and furnish equipment for town recreation area

#### Town of Popple River

Top 3 Outdoor Recreation Issues:

1. Additional Walking Trails
2. Improve Fishing access
3. Facilities at recreational points

How to satisfy local issues:

- Identify funding
- Local Leadership

#### Town of Wabeno

Top 3 Outdoor Recreation Issues:

1. Activities for Seniors
2. Activities for young people
3. Bicycle safety for young people.

### WISCONSIN DUAL SPORT RIDERS

NCWRPC staff has received over 10 letters from members of the Wisconsin Dual Sport Riders. This organization has held dual sport motorcycle events in Wabeno for the past ten (10) years. Wisconsin Dual Sport Riders has worked with Forest County in the past to gain access on the state trails that the county manages. The Wisconsin Dual Sports Riders wants off-highway and dual sport motorcycling be included in the Outdoor Recreation Plan. The issues facing this group is to raise

awareness of off-high and dual sport motorcycling in the county and to have access to county and state trails in the area.

## OTHER PLAN REFERENCES

NCWRPC staff created the SCORP 2005-2010 summary that exists in Attachment B.

Map 1 summarizes the location of DNR Land Legacy areas, potential DNR State Trails, and potential trails from the NCWRPC Regional Bike Plan that are all summarized in Chapter 1 – Introduction – of this Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

## NEEDS DRIVEN PARK PLANNING

Since the 1960's, an accepted practice has been to adopt a uniform national land standard, such as 10 acres per 1000 population, for park planning. A standard amount of land for parks and recreation cannot be universal for a park. A standard land measure is only useful for specific facilities like determining how much land is needed for a specific use like a baseball diamond. The number of baseball diamonds and other facilities are not the same among similar sized communities nationally.

The basis of this revised approach to park and recreation standards is to create a level of service as defined by the customers' needs rather than an arbitrary standard. The level of service is generated locally for each type of park, trail, or public access to a water body. Public input is collected in multiple ways and the needs for a particular park, trail, or public access to a water body are determined. When specific facilities are needed, then facility standards are used to design the facility and budget for the necessary land, materials, and labor to satisfy that need.

A needs driven and facilities based park planning approach presents the current demand for park and recreation opportunities. The size of a park site is determined by the number of facilities needed to satisfy the active recreation demand within the service area of each park, and the unprogrammed recreation land that buffers different uses within a park and which buffers the park from other non-park uses such as residential housing. Determining the space needs for unprogrammed land is subjective and objective based on first hand knowledge of the area and how community residents and tourists use the parks. Determining how much unprogrammed land to use for buffering parks is subjective based upon how aesthetically pleasing an area should be, and what the surrounding land uses are.

The size of a park is determined by three criteria:

1. Physical geography. Does the site have steep hills, woodlands, or wetlands? Such natural features are useful for exploration, conservation, aesthetic buffers, and unprogrammed lands.
2. Park facilities. What activities are allowed or will be allowed? How much land is needed for each use?
3. Unprogrammed buffers. How much land within the park is needed to separate different uses? How much land is needed for future expansion? Maybe a park will not expand within 2-years, but within 10-20 years expansion may be imminent. When the opportunity to buy land exists, then reaction must be swift to seize the opportunity. A park growth boundary should be created for this reason.

## **CHAPTER 5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The following recommendations are aimed at satisfying needs identified to build Forest County's status as a prime recreation and natural resource area and to provide recreation facilities for all Forest County residents and the surrounding tourism region.

The recommendations are based on the goals and objectives, and the public comment documented in Chapter 4 – Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment. Although it is unlikely that all recommendations presented in this plan will be undertaken in the next five years, they should be recognized as causes for action if the opportunity or need arises.

### **COUNTYWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### MRA Park

One of the top priorities for Forest County is the development of a large destination Motorized Recreation Area (MRA). Potential sites will need to be studied further to identify the best location for this park, however this type of development would fit ideally since it would utilize the natural assets of the county and benefit overall tourism and quality of life in the county.

The County has a long history with off road vehicles, including all-terrain vehicles. For over 40 years the Crandon International Off-Road Raceway has hosted the Brush Run Races and World Championship Races. The Crandon International Off-Road Raceway annually attracts thousands of motorized recreational enthusiasts to Forest County. The Motorized Recreation Area would have a synergistic relationship with the Crandon International Off-Road Raceway to make it a premier destination.

#### Scenic Byways

The county should consider State Highway 55 Wisconsin Scenic Byway program. Forest County has had preliminary discussions regarding Highway 55 as a scenic byway. Currently Langlade County is also exploring a scenic byway designation for Highway 55. The county should explore options to collaborate with Langlade County to obtain a scenic byway designation for Highway 55. In addition any other appropriate State Highways should be considered for this program.

Established in 2005, the Scenic Byways Program represents a cooperative effort between the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and local community groups to preserve, promote and enhance some of our most scenic and historic state highway corridors.

To qualify as a scenic byway, a roadway must be part of the state highway system: a numbered state or federal non-interstate highway at least 30-miles long that offers travelers outstanding scenic views or historic resources combined with unique recreational, cultural or other educational opportunities. Some of the benefits include: Promotion as a state or national Scenic Byway; Associated prestige for

obtaining designation; and Opportunity to compete for federal 80/20 matching funds for trail heads, visitor centers, and historic building restorations.

#### Single track motorcycle trails

With the increasing demand for dual sport and off highway motorcycling in Forest County the county should support these activities. The county should work with groups like the Wisconsin Dual Sport Riders to locate appropriate areas to designate for dual sport and off highway motorcycling.

#### Canoe/Kayak Routes

With the popularity of canoe and kayak routes within the County, information signs should be installed at each route site. These signs should provide a map indicating the length of the route, points of interest, and pick-up locations.

#### National Forest Lands

Forest County should work with the United States Forest Service to keep the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest lands open for recreational use.

#### ATV Trail Development

Forest County should continue to develop ATV and other off road vehicle trails in the county. The development of new trails should examine new trails will connect with the existing trail network within the county. Connectivity to ATV trails in adjacent counties should also be considered.

#### Wolf River State Trailhead

Develop a Trail Head for the Wolf River State Trail in the City of Crandon. The trail head would include a paved parking area, picnic area with tables and a shower/restroom facility.

#### Biking/Hiking Trail Development

Develop a hiking-biking trail near the City of Crandon in three separate phases. Phase one connects the Crandon School District to the City of Crandon by developing a surfaced trail adjacent to U.S. Hwy 8. Phase two proceeds through the City of Crandon connecting to the Forest County Potawatomi Community Health and Wellness Center by developing a surfaced trail adjacent to U.S. Hwy 8. Phase three connects the City of Crandon to Mole Lake and the Mole Lake Casino Lodge and Conference Center by developing a surfaced trail adjacent to County Hwy S and U.S. Hwy 55.

### COUNTY FOREST LANDS RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Non-Motorized Use

While there are trails available, consideration needs to be given to making all or a portion of the trails more multi-use year-round facilities. Better trail designation with signs, and trail maintenance of hiking, biking, horseback riding and x-ski trails, will allow more users to enjoy the trails.

Multiple purpose trails can have snowmobile and ATV use in winter, and hiking & bicycling in summer. SCORP page B-17 starts to describe user conflicts associated with having the same trails designated as both non-motorized and motorized in the same season. So a snowmobile trail in winter will not have user conflicts with ATVs, but will have conflicts with cross country skiers. If a non-motorized trail would allow ATVs in spring/summer/fall, then post an ATV speed limit of 25 mph within a mile of urban trail segments – City of Crandon, & town centers of Laona and Wabeno.

#### Motorized Use

The Forest County Forestry Committee has determined that there is sufficient use of the county forest by designated snowmobile and ATV trails. If local snowmobile or ATV clubs develop new trail adjacent to county forest land, full consideration will be given to develop links or connecting trails across county forest land provided these trails are part of the state funded snowmobile or ATV programs.

#### Otter Springs

The headwaters of the Otter Creek is a natural springs where two pipes are exposed from the ground and covered by an 8'X8' log spring house. This spring house was placed on the Federal and State Registry of Historic Places list, but is deteriorating due to weathering. The County should consider cooperatively working with the Potawatomi Community in pursuing grant money to restore this shelter.

#### County Fairgrounds

The County should consider relocation of the fairgrounds. The current site does not provide growth/expansion and is not very visible to the public.

#### TOWN OF ALVIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve and expand playground area.
- Build a small shelter
- Need to surface the basketball court and another lot

#### TOWN OF ARGONNE RECOMMENDATIONS

- New bleachers for the ball parks
- New refreshment stand at the ball park

#### TOWN OF BLACKWELL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve Rat River trail

#### TOWN OF CRANDON RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish ATV trail from Crandon to county line and hook up with existing trail system
- Improve Boat landing at Little Rice Lake
- Make Picnic Area at Little Rice Lake

#### TOWN OF NASHVILLE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Build a town park and recreation area

## TOWN OF POPPLE RIVER RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3 Restrooms for trailheads
- 2 Cast Iron fires grills
- 2 Picnic Tables
- 4 miles of walking trails
- Improve Boat/Canoe Landings at Long Lake, Bastil Lake and Pine River
- Build Boat/Canoe Landing on Popple River.

## TOWN OF WABENO RECOMMENDATIONS

- Update, replace and purchase playground equipment
- Replace roof at boat landing
- Paint museum and repair leak in roof
- Paint floor of bandshell
- Photograph and re-label items in museum
- Build ramp for loading/unloading ATV's

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS 2012 – 2016

Capital improvements to parks are the addition of labor and materials that improve the overall value and usefulness of that park. Capital improvements are designed and funded individually through segregated municipal funds. Routine maintenance is considered the normal cycle of repair and upkeep for existing facilities. Routine maintenance does not increase the value or usefulness of the park, and is traditionally funded through the Forestry, Land, and Parks Department's operations budget, and through local town government budgets. Non-routine maintenance of park facilities, however, is usually considered a capital improvement item. For example, upgrading an outdoor restroom facility for universal access would qualify as a capital improvement, while repainting an outdoor restroom would be considered routine maintenance.

The capital improvement framework for each facility is a combination of several types of projects. These projects are ranked according to their importance and priority in the overall development of the facility. Capital improvements are ranked as follows:

1. Improvements to existing facilities:
  - a) To correct health and safety hazards;
  - b) To update deficient facilities; and
  - c) To modernize adequate but outdated facilities.
2. Installation of facilities as deemed necessary through citizen participation.
3. Development of new facilities as found necessary through comparison to park and recreation standards, and public comment.

The following Capital Improvement Plans are proposed for the Forest County recreational system. The projects are listed in a priority and are subject to change. The Forest County Forestry Department created each capital improvement plan. All upgrades and new construction will take

into consideration meeting ADA standards. As funds become available, the following projects will be completed.

**Veterans Memorial Park**

1. Trees – Continue the tree-planting program using either bare rootstock or containerized trees to provide shade as well as sight and sound barriers. This project could be an annual project of 50-100 trees per year.
2. Fire Rings – Continue to purchase fire rings for campsites for cooking and campfires. This could be an annual project of 10-15 rings per year.
3. Playground Equipment – Add ADA accessible playground equipment and upgrade existing playground structures.
4. Beach Expansion and Restoration

**Development of New County Park**

**Development of and Equestrian Trail Head**

## CHAPTER 6 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

### INTRODUCTION

There are a number of different strategies available for the implementation of this plan. This includes securing funds to carry out the five year planning program and adopting techniques to carry out the general recommendations and to move towards attainment of the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.

### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

#### Shoreland Zoning

Wisconsin's Shoreland Management Program established statewide minimum standards for shoreland development. Counties are required to adopt and administer shoreland zoning ordinances that meet or exceed these minimum requirements. The statewide minimum standards for county shoreland zoning ordinances are found in Chapter NR 115, Wis. Admin. Code. Be sure to check with Forest County to find out about their development standards.

#### Park Dedication

Subdivision regulations can be used by counties to require residential subdividers to dedicate a portion of subdivided land for permanent park and open space use in areas which are experiencing significant residential growth. Neighborhood parks may be acquired in this manner in newly developing residential areas. Local landowners should also be encouraged to dedicate land to their communities for recreational uses. Numerous small town memorial parks have been acquired through the generosity of local citizens. If citizens are made aware of community needs, this form of private action may continue to enrich the public resources of small communities. Forest County will focus efforts to provide connectivity between developments/subdivisions and recreation areas through trail development. The County will support development of other recreation areas within developments/subdivisions where feasible.

#### Use of Easements

Open space and public recreation use of private land may be acquired by easement. With an easement, certain rights are granted to the public for a specific period of time and the private owner is compensated for that public use. In purchasing an easement, the public body acquires a right either to use the land in a specific manner or to restrict the use to which an owner may put their land. For example, the rights to establish public hiking or fishing access to a waterway may be purchased through an easement.

### Leases

Leases may be used as measures to use or protect land until more permanent measures may be found. By leasing parcels of land, the land remains on the county's and the community's tax rolls and can be renegotiated or non-renewed by the property owner if the monetary prospects for another use proves overpowering.

Another leasing method involves outright purchase of land by the county. The county then leases the land to a private party or organization with use restrictions placed on the land. Under this method, the county receives some monetary return on its investment and retains control over the use of the land.

### Historic Sites

Historical sites can be rewarding additions to any community's recreation program. This is especially true in areas oriented to serving a significant tourist trade. Nearly all communities in North Central Wisconsin are in this category and they should all identify their historic sites. A study of potential areas is encouraged. Assistance and guidance for the study can be obtained from the Wisconsin Council for local History, an organization affiliated with the State Historical Society and the local County Historical Society.

### Program Costs

A community should carefully watch operations and maintenance costs when setting up a parks program. A too ambitious acquisition and/or development program can easily lead to annual costs larger than the community can afford to meet. Recreation facilities like golf courses and swimming pools, for example, require large annual maintenance investments to continue.

### Capital Improvements

Community officials should develop five year capital improvements programs for recreation that reflect implementation of proposals made in their plans and the priorities they place on them. To be functional, the program must be flexible and be subjected to annual review.

In developing a recreation program, care should be taken that the annual cost of maintenance does not exceed an amount the community can afford to pay. Too often, an ambitious program can lose community support as a result of prohibitive maintenance costs.

### Monetary Aid Programs

Take advantage of state and federal financial and technical aid programs, which are designed, to assist communities in meeting recreational, needs, and maintain community eligibility for such programs.

The Stewardship Fund is a comprehensive aid program for the promotion of resource conservation and outdoor recreation opportunities. It consists of several older aid programs such as LAWCON and Local Park Aids, combined with new programs, such as the Urban Rivers Program. Appendix D gives an explanation of the Stewardship Fund. For additional information obtain the most current booklet titled Open Project Selection Process from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Requirements for application to the Stewardship Fund include the requirement that the applicant submits an approved comprehensive recreation plan. This plan is designed to meet that requirement. For the remaining program requirements, or additional information contact:

Jillian Steffes, Community Services Specialist  
Rhineland Service Center  
107 Sutliff Ave  
Rhineland, WI 54501 (715) 365-8928

Besides state and federal aid programs, there are other sources of funding such as private foundations, trust funds, and civic and recreation organizations. For information on private foundations and trusts see Foundations in Wisconsin: A Directory, compiled by Susan A. Hopewood.

#### Future Planning

At a minimum, all communities should reassess their recreational needs near the end of the five year period covered by this plan. More frequent appraisal of needs may be called for under certain conditions such as extreme variations in funding capability, rapid population changes, actions of other units of government and private enterprise, and the recognition of new legislation, laws, and public programs.

#### Priorities

The need for community officials to establish priorities within their recreation program is emphasized by the scope of the previous recommendations. Although it is unlikely that all of these recommendations will be undertaken within the time period of this plan, there is an outstanding opportunity for inroads to be made. Recognition of increasing demands for recreation, space and facilities should prompt immediate action.

#### Lifetime Activities

Community and school officials responsible for recreation should place greater emphasis on land areas and facilities that can support "lifetime" recreational activities. Falling into this category are activities like golf, tennis, all target sports, horseshoes, cross country skiing, skating, running, volleyball, handball, badminton, back packing, and canoeing. Many schools have programs aimed at teaching recreational activities that people can participate in for a lifetime.

#### Winter Activities

All communities should provide winter outdoor recreation facilities. Skating and sliding sports (sledding, tobogganing, and skiing) can generally be provided without large investments. Skating, for example, can be as involved as providing rinks for ice hockey or as simple as flooding a small area of a school playground. Likewise, merely blocking off a lightly traveled street with a suitable slope can frequently provide a sliding area.

#### Snowmobile/ATV Routes

Since snowmobiles and ATVs can be considered a noise nuisance and a hazard for non-users, municipalities may wish to designate specific routes through the municipality for snowmobile/ATV use instead of designating all roads open to snowmobiles and ATVs.

### Specialized Facilities

Encourage development of specialized facilities by the private sector. Specialized facilities such as golf clubs, intensive use ATV areas, and ski resorts can be an important adjunct to public recreational facilities. Quality and availability for public use should be emphasized.

### Municipal and School District Cooperation

Promote cooperation between municipalities and school districts in meeting recreational needs. With good planning, cooperation may take the form of joint land acquisition and/or facilities development cost sharing. Increased municipal use of existing school facilities during non-school hours should also be encouraged.

### Senior Citizen Involvement

Involve senior citizens in community park development and beautification and provide recreational facilities for their use. Although senior citizens often compose a significant proportion of the total community's population, they are often neglected in recreational planning. Benches placed near neighborhood parks and play areas and non-intensive sports facilities such as horseshoe pits located in community parks help to provide a place for the senior citizens. Small, passive use parks and garden located near nursing and retirement homes should also be encouraged. In addition, senior citizens can provide invaluable assistance in beautifying parks and open spaces and can thereby become more involved in community group life.

### Youth Programs

Few recreational opportunities have been planned for the communities' high school age youth. School activities provide most recreational outlet during winter months, but in summer there is a distinct void. This plan recommends a study to determine what recreation activities would be best received by this age and what opportunity there is to provide for them at public parks.

### Service Group Involvement

Involve organized service groups in needed park and recreation development, including development of competitive sports area and neighborhood parks. Traditionally, service groups and recreation organizations, such as Lions Club, V.F.W., softball leagues, and snowmobile clubs have played an active role in the development of such facilities. Continued activity of this type should be encouraged. In addition, service groups could help to meet the need for neighborhood facilities by supplementing municipal financial resources and providing organization and volunteer labor.

### Community Beautification

All communities should recognize that community appearance is an important component of a recreation program. Maintained streets and sidewalks, attractive trees and shrubs, well cared for homes and commercial buildings, and neatly landscaped home lawns, public open space, and parks are principal contributors to community beautification. Such a program is most rewarding to persons engaged in passive recreation.

## **CHAPTER 7 PROVISIONS FOR UPDATING**

Essential characteristics of any planning process include an inventory of what exists, determining what has occurred since the last plan was created, and what is desired locally for the future. Periodic updating of the plan is necessary for continued refinement and course correction to keep the plan current.

Some of the planning recommendations will not be accomplished within this five year plan period, and additional recommendations may be added as new recreational activities are requested or the status of existing facilities changes.

Annual review of the plan recommendations and capital improvement tables by the Forest County Forestry Committee will keep this plan current. This review may also occur after a large turn over in elected officials after a local election.

The review process includes surveying the local units of government, the school districts, and outdoor recreation groups about the following information:

1. What improvements are needed to existing facilities?
2. What new facilities are necessary to satisfy demand?
3. Which potential projects fulfill this demand?
4. Who is the project sponsor?

The Forest County Forestry Committee will review information collected from surveys, and evaluate the need for proposed projects based on standards and priorities as outlined in this plan.

Establishing a full plan update every five years will assure that the plan reflects changes in the recreational needs of the county, and will maintain the county's eligibility for grant programs.

ATTACHMENT A  
OUTDOOR RECREATION SURVEYS

THE TABULATED RESULTS FOR SURVEYS EXISTS IN:  
CHAPTER 4 – OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

ATTACHMENT B

SCORP 2005-2010 SUMMARY

ATTACHMENT C  
FACILITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

ATTACHMENT D

STATE AND FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS