FOREST COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted May 17, 2011

PREPARED BY:
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY:
NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
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CHAPTER 1:
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1.1 Background

This is the first of nine chapters that comprise the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. The plan provides detailed information on the county and also includes information on all fourteen towns, the city, and the two tribes. Data and text related to geography, climate, and demographics came from the 2003 Forest County Soil Survey, and the 1990, 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census, and NCWRPC.

Forest County is located in northeastern Wisconsin; and is bound on the north by the Upper Peninsula of the state of Michigan; 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 the Planning Context Map 1-1.

Forest County is predominantly rural forestland. Nearly half of the county is part of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Two Native American Tribes also inhabit the county. The largest settlements of all county residents include Wabeno, Laona, and the City of Crandon, which is also the county seat that has a 2008 estimated population of 1,984 people.

A. History

Native Americans inhabited Forest County when the first European explorers, missionaries, and fur traders traveled into the county. These traders followed a centuries old route from Green Bay to the copper rich area of Lake Superior. Settlement in Forest County was further spurred by the U.S. Government, which in the 1860’s built a road to transport military forces from Fort Howard in Green Bay to Fort Wilkins on the Keweenaw Peninsula.

Many of the communities were established in the 1860’s as trading posts and later as railroad towns to support the timber industry in the county. These communities include: Argonne, Armstrong Creek, City of Crandon, Laona, and Wabeno.

After the majority of the timber had been harvested, and the Great Depression arrived, most of the lumber mills shut down. In the 1920s, the Nicolet National Forest was established in 10 counties on over 1,500,000 acres of land, and numerous land companies purchased the abandoned lands for a second wave of settlers. In the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was established, and enrolled men performed forest fire control, tree planting, road construction, recreation area construction and maintenance, installation of telephone lines, fish and wildlife habitat improvement, timber stand improvement and surveying.

After several decades of growth, the cutover land is again harvestable. Tourism has joined the timber industry as the driving economic forces to this day.
B. Physical Geography

The county has a total area of 669,863 acres. Of this total, about 647,471 acres is land and 22,392 acres are water bodies that are more than 40 acres in size. Forest County is located entirely in the Northern Highlands physiographic region, which was glaciated during the Pleistocene Age. The latest glaciation by the Langlade Lobe has determined the physiography, relief, and drainage.

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, a Precambrian quartzite isolated rock hill in the southeastern part of the county, is about 1,610 feet above sea level.

C. 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.

In winter, the average temperature is 14 degrees F and the average daily minimum temperature is 4 degrees. The lowest temperature on record, which occurred on January 17, 1982, is -39 degrees. In summer, the average temperature is 63 degrees and the average daily maximum temperature is 76 degrees. The highest recorded temperature, which occurred on July 26, 1955, is 100 degrees.

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. Thunderstorms occur on about 34 days each year.

The average seasonal snowfall is about 67 inches. The greatest snow depth at any one time during the period of record was 56 inches. On the average, 93 days of the year have at least 1 inch of snow on the ground. The number of such days varies greatly from year to year.

The sun shines 65 percent of the time possible in summer and 45 percent in winter. The prevailing wind is from the southwest. Average wind speed of 12 miles per hour occurs in spring.
D. Public Participation

A variety of public participation efforts were conducted to involve as many viewpoints into the planning process. A formal public participation plan was adopted outlining these efforts. See Attachment A.

E. Planning Context in Wisconsin

Planning and zoning has been a function of local units of government for over 50 years in Wisconsin. Over the years almost every city, village and county has developed various plans, from land use plans, to master plans to development plans. Existing authority for planning is provided in state statutes, including §59, 60, 61 and 62. Recently, however, at the national level, there has been concern over the effects of extensive development patterns (“sprawl”) that have become more prevalent in both urban and rural areas. Many causes ranging from government policies, such as the construction of the interstate highway system, to trends within the economy, such as increased reliance on trucks for the transportation of goods and consumer preference for suburban housing, have been blamed for this phenomenon. Whatever the causes, many of the effects – traffic congestion, loss of open space, abandonment of central cities, degradation of air and water quality, and increased reliance on the automobile as the only viable transportation alternative – have become increasingly troubling for a large segment of the public. These issues have led to a discussion on land use planning.

As early as the 1960s and early 1970s, several study committees and commissions were created to examine the need for land use reform in the state. Of particular importance were the Tarr Task Force, the Knowles Commission and the Wallace Commission. Although these efforts and their recommendations were never incorporated at the time, they were not forgotten and would influence later changes.

The Tarr Task Force was the first to look at the planning laws. It reviewed state statutes and problems related to municipal boundary changes, regional planning, and area wide service provision. They developed several recommendations in the area of boundary review and annexation.

The Knowles Commission found the state’s land use laws to be complex and outdated. The report summarized that “a steady rise in population, a pattern of urbanization and sprawling subdivisions, an increased appetite for the outdoors, and economic expansion continue to consume our land resources”. It went on to conclude that “Land use regulation is basically a local matter, and that only certain resources and uses were of wider significance. The model proposed was that state and Regional
planning would set the framework within which local decision-making would take place.

The Wallace Commission was a broad study that reviewed many issues, including education and health care. It also touched on some planning issues. This report recommended changes in the area of incorporation, annexation and consolidation. It concluded that a flexible system was needed to deal with local issues.

Another major statewide discussion occurred again in the early 1990’s, when the issues of urban sprawl, redevelopment and “smart growth” were being discussed at the national level. During this same period, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources each developed independent Task Forces to study land use issues. Both agencies reports identified strategies and policies for future decision-making at the state level in relation to land use.

These reports and all the previous study efforts, as well as the national discussion related to planning, spurred Governor Thompson to create the State Interagency Land Use Council and the Wisconsin Strategic Growth Task Force in 1994. The Land Use Council was to set guidelines for state involvement in land use issues, while the Task Force was to recommend ways for coordinating state agencies, local governments, and local private groups when deciding land use issues. The Task Force presented their findings in 1995 to the Interagency Land Use Council with a report entitled “Land Use Issues Facing Wisconsin”. The report identified trends, intergovernmental relationships, public attitudes, and the strengths and weaknesses of Wisconsin’s land use policies. Wisconsin was compared to other states and a number of recommendations were given to address the land use issues at hand. The most important issue to be identified in the report was the need for a revision of the state’s planning enabling legislation.

The Interagency Land Use Council delivered its report “Planning Wisconsin: Report of the State Interagency Land Use Council” to the Governor in 1996. The report offered land use goals, ways to improve local land use planning efforts, what should be included in a comprehensive plan, and how citizen participation in land use planning could be enhanced. It is these studies and reports and the comments and criticisms that followed, that laid the foundation for the State’s Comprehensive Planning Legislation.

In the early 1990s there was increasing interest by Wisconsin State agencies in the effects of land-use on the web of government decisions that shape the built environment. The Metro 2020 Policy Board, a group focused on the southeastern part of the state, in its 1991 recommendations cited a need to coordinate land-use policies to transportation strategies, acknowledging that certain patterns of land-use increase the need for transportation investments.
This led to creation of a Statewide Land Use Task Force under the direction of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) that applied these principles statewide. In its final report the Task Force identified a number of problems, among them: no State land-use policy, no requirement of consistency between adopted land-use plans and specific policy decisions, and no mechanisms for implementing land-use plans.

At about the same time, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) undertook a study of land-use practices from the perspective of their effect on environmental quality. Acknowledging that many agencies were responsible for land-use decisions, the DNR Land Use Task Force addressed many of the same questions brought up in the WisDOT report including the lack of consistency and enforcement mechanisms in land-use decision-making. The report issued in June of 1994 advocated a more “holistic” approach to land-use questions by DNR and the need to adjust certain of its internal policies, and increase the amount and availability of data. It also strongly recommended a coordinated interagency approach to the problem, “...there is no statewide land use policy or vision. Inconsistent interagency coordination...can lead to decisions that harm both the economy and the environment.”

It was to address just this problem that Governor Thompson appointed the State Interagency Land Use Council in 1995. In its report 1996, the Council acknowledged that, “the structure of Wisconsin’s current land use system...can best be characterized as a fragmented process with each level of government responsible for specific goals.” Among its recommendations, the report proposes creation of a permanent interagency Land Use Council as a means of coordinating policy on the state level, and a statewide Land Information System. In the section headed “How can county and municipal planning be improved?” the report recommends requiring counties to adopt comprehensive plans, and voluntary adoption of comprehensive plans by municipalities, and a requirement that land-use ordinances “be consistent with adopted land use plans. Land uses that conflict with adopted county and/or municipal plans could not be approved unless the plan is amended”. The report also recommends steps to foster cooperation among local governments, a review of the role of regional planning commissions, and the requirement for public hearings as part of any land-use planning process.

In the spring of 1999 a definition of a comprehensive plan was included in the Governor’s Budget Bill. Several groups working together, including the Wisconsin Realtors Association, the Wisconsin Builders Association, the 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin, the League of Municipalities, the Wisconsin Towns Association, and the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association developed the definition. The University of Wisconsin-Madison facilitated the effort.
In October of 1999, the Governor signed into law Wisconsin Act 9, the Budget Bill, containing substantial revisions of statutes governing comprehensive planning. The law (§66.1001 WI Stats.) requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan by 2010. It lays out the nine required Chapters of the plan and requires a public participation process. Jurisdictions that do not have a comprehensive plan in place by the deadline may not engage in actions that impact land-use. The statute outlines the requirements that must be satisfied, specifically for those that utilize the State grant program to develop their plan.

Fourteen planning goals are suggested. These goals, however, are not mandates for specific provisions that must be included in the comprehensive plan, but criteria on which the grant applications will be judged. The goals are:

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

The law has been revised by the signing of three additional bills into law. The first is AB 872, containing “technical revisions” which was signed May 10, 2000. The second bill, signed April 13, 2004, is AB 608, which reduced the number of items that must be consistent with the plan to three, these are: official mapping, subdivision ordinances and zoning ordinances. The final law change is known as Act 372, signed in May 18, 2010, that made some further changes. It provided clarification in several areas. First, it provided a delay of the January 1, 2010 consistency requirement, which included Forest County, for those communities in process, but not yet complete with the planning process. Another change was the clarification that towns do not need village powers to adopt a plan as previously determined under the law. There was also clarification that the Comprehensive Plan is not by itself a regulation; any regulation would come from other local actions, such as zoning. It went on to address the question of consistency. Basically in context of the law it means “furthers or does not contradict the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the comprehensive plan.” It provides discretion to local governments related to the interpretation of their comprehensive plan. Act 372 also clarifies that only changes to ordinances enacted or amended after January 1, 2010, need to be consistent with a local plan.

The new comprehensive planning law (§66.1001 Wis. Stats.) is significant in many ways. The law creates for the first time a definition of a comprehensive plan; it requires that almost all local units of government have a plan; it sets requirements for public participation; and requires that the plan be consistent with local implementations tools. Most important, is that it maintains that the process be locally driven; so all local units of government decide their own future.

F. County Planning Process

Forest County and its local units of government worked for over two years to develop a planning process. Following that process an application was submitted in the fall of 2007 to the Wisconsin Department of Administration Comprehensive Planning Grant Program.

That grant was awarded and the plan process began in the spring of 2008. In all, ten of the fourteen towns (Alvin, Argonne, Armstrong Creek, Blackwell, Freedom, Hiles, Laona, Lincoln, Nashville, and Wabeno), both the Mole Lake and Potawatomi Tribes, and the City of Crandon, along with the county participated in this planning effort.
The process began with general data collection and mapping to provide a foundation for the development of plans, the next step was the creation of local levels plans with the towns, tribes and the city. This was then followed by the county plan. Each local plan dealt with issues at the local level the county plan focused on county level issues.

At the county level the Intergovernmental Relations Committee provided oversight to the development of the plan, much like plan commissions oversaw development of the local plans. The County Comprehensive Plan brought together all of the local plans to create the foundation for the County Comprehensive Plan. Several meetings were held over a year and a half. In addition, citizens and a variety of state and federal agencies provided input and comments throughout the process. Draft text and maps were available in all town halls, tribal centers, city hall, and the courthouse, as well as the libraries throughout the process. A website was established as well at www.ncwrpc.org/forestcounty.

The Intergovernmental Committee passed a Resolution on January 6, 2011. A public hearing was held on February 15, 2011 by the County Board of Supervisors and the Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Ordinance on May 17, 2011.
1.2 Demographics

Reviewing the socio-economic trends throughout the county is important to understand what has occurred, and what is likely to occur in the future. The following demographics section includes total population, age distribution, total households, educational levels, employment, and income levels.

A. Population

In 2010, 9,304 people lived in Forest County. This is a decrease of over 7 percent since 2000. Table 1 displays total population for each local government in the county, as well as the overall state. Although the county experienced growth between 1990 and 2000, every community declined in population in the last decade, except for the Town of Crandon. Over the last twenty years, the population increased by only 528 persons.

In terms of percentage growth, the county had a lower rate of change when compared to the state over the last two decades. In terms of race, according to the 2000 Census, about 86 percent of Forest County residents are white, while about 11 percent are Native American, and 1 percent is other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
B. Age Distribution

Population distribution is important to the planning process. In particular, two groups are examined here. They are the 17 years of age and younger, and the 65 and older population groups. These are often referred to as dependent populations and have different needs. The younger group requires schools, and the older group is retiring. Comparing these groups over time, and to the state, show demographic changes in the county.

All three towns in Forest County that grew in population (Lincoln, Nashville, and Wabeno) have large Tribal populations, and have a large number of vacation homes (seasonal housing). The Tribal populations are relatively young populations as shown with 20.6 (Potawatomi) & 26.0 (Mole Lake) median ages in 2000 (U.S. Census). The Sokaogon Chippewa Community lives next to Mole Lake in Nashville. The Forest County Potawatomi Community lives in Lincoln and Wabeno. School aged children from Lincoln and Nashville attend school in Crandon. About 31% of the Crandon School District's student body, and about 21.8% of the Wabeno School District's student body in 2006 is Native American (WDOA, State Tribal Relations Office, Nov. 2006). Most of the housing in Lincoln (57.9% is seasonal of total housing in Lincoln in year 2000), Nashville (57.5%), and Wabeno (35%) is made up of vacation homes, which throughout the Northwoods have been converting to permanent homes as people retire.

Since Forest County is adding residents from net migration, and since immigrants are almost always retirees, then that is why Forest County's average age of its residents is growing faster than the state. Forest County's average age was 43.2 years in 2000. By 2020 it is anticipated that the average age of county residents will be 46.3 years, and by 2030 it will be 49 years. This puts the county’s average age substantially above the state mean of 36.4 years of age in 2000, and the gap widens with time as the state average age increases to 39.6 years in 2020, and 41.0 years in 2030. (WDWD, OEA, 2008)

Between 2010 and 2030, the population is projected to decrease by 3 residents, less than a tenth of a percent. Those 16 and older are projected to increase by more than 230 or 2.8 percent. Those 65 and older are projected to increase by almost 1,400 or 62 percent. Clearly the population is aging which may have serious repercussions for employers in the future. See the Economic Development Chapter for more information about how this affects the workforce in Forest County. (WDWD, OEA, 2008)

Table 2 shows that the population of the 17 and younger group from 1990 to 2000 declined from 27.1 percent to about 25.3 percent of Forest County's population. This age group became a larger percentage of the population in Alvin, Armstrong Creek, Caswell, and Wabeno. However, in terms of total numbers, there was an increase of about 155 people in this group, eight
Table 2: 
**Persons 17 Years of Age and Younger**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>1990 % of Total</th>
<th>2000 % of Total</th>
<th>1990 - 2000 Net Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>(15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>(12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>2,381</td>
<td>2,536</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>1,288,982</td>
<td>1,368,756</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>79,774</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

Forest County’s older population is increasing at a much faster rate than the rest of the population. The Office of Economic Advisors from Workforce Development (WDWD OEA) predicts that while the total population of 16 and older is expected to increase by only about 3 percent between 2000 and 2030, those 60 and older are expected to increase by about 46 percent, an increase substantially higher than that of the general population.

Table 3 shows that from 1990 to 2000 the 65 and older group increased from 18.9 percent to about 19.3 percent of Forest County’s population, while the state level decreased from 13.3 percent to 13.1 percent. At the local level several towns had a lower percentage of the older age group in their populations, which means that their population is getting younger by additional births or in-migration of people under 65 years old. Based on increasing life expectancy and advances in medicine, the 65 and older group is expected to grow in absolute numbers and as a percentage of total population. This trend is occurring at both the state and national levels as well.
The shift in population toward the older age groups will significantly impact the future labor supply, school system, and health care industry in the county.

### Table 3: Persons 65 Years of Age and Older

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>1990% of Total</th>
<th>2000% of Total</th>
<th>1980 - 2000 Net Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>(19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>(18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>1,656</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>651,221</td>
<td>702,553</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>51,332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

### C. Households

The county trend in households in the county reflects the national trend of fewer people living in each household. As more people decide to live alone and more couples are having fewer children or no children at all, the number of households has increased faster than the population as a whole. Forest County’s households were larger (2.39 people per household) than the state (2.50) in 2000. Table 4 shows the county (23%) with a higher rate of increase in the number of households from 1990 to 2000 than the state (14%). The Department of Administration (WDOA) projects that persons per household will decline to 2.03 in Forest County by 2030.
The WDOA household projections indicate that by 2030 there will be 846 more households in the county. The most households are projected to occur in the Town of Nashville (198 households by year 2030), the Town of Lincoln (187), and the Town of Wabeno (118). Fewer than 10 households are projected to be gained by 2030 in the towns of Ross, Laona, Caswell, and Blackwell.

D. Educational levels

Educational attainment improved overall from 1990 to 2000. Table 5 shows the number of people who graduated from high school as a percentage of those over 25 in Forest County, increased from 64.1 percent in 1990 to 78.5 percent in 2000. The county increase was reflected in all of the local communities, except Alvin, which remained at 61% of the population.

Table 4: Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-6%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>3,290</td>
<td>4,043</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>1,822,118</td>
<td>2,084,544</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>262,426</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
The rate of persons 25 and older with four or more years of college is increasing within the county, but not all local units saw an increase. See Table 6. Only Blackwell shows a decline, because the Blackwell Job Corps no longer required employees to live in Blackwell. Even though the county rate is increasing, the gap is widening between the county and state. In 1990, the gap was 10.1 percent, and by 2000 the gap has widened to 12.4 percent.
E. Employment

Labor force participation is defined as residents aged 16 and up who are either employed or looking for work. In 2005, Forest County’s labor force participation rate was 63 percent. The participation rate in the county is the seventh lowest in the state, primarily because of the lack of participation not only from older residents but also from some of the younger populations. In fact, the participation rate of residents aged 16-19 years of 44 percent is second lowest in the state for that age group and the rate of 62-64 years of 25 percent is the third lowest in the state. The highest labor force participation of 87 percent, also below average, is from the county’s 25-29 year olds. (WDWD OEA, 2006)

Table 7 shows that in 2000, there were over 4,000 residents employed in Forest County. This reflects a 29.1 percent increase in the number of people employed since 1990. Most of the local communities also increased, except Blackwell and Laona. Employment is further discussed in the Economic Development Chapter.
F. Income levels

Median income and per capita income are the two major indicators of income. Table 8 shows that the county median household income rose 47.2 percent from 1990 to 2000, compared to the state increase of 32.8 percent. Meanwhile in Table 9, the county per capita income increased by 49.3 percent, compared to the state increase of 37.5 percent. Note that these changes have not been adjusted for inflation.

All of Forest County's local communities had rising median household incomes and rising per capita incomes. Income levels are further discussed in the Economic Development Chapter.

---

Table 7: Total Employed Persons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>-27.8%</td>
<td>(44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>171.8%</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>-4.0%</td>
<td>(23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>104.2%</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>3,132</td>
<td>4,044</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>2,517,238</td>
<td>2,734,925</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>217,687</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
### Table 8: Median Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
<td>$16,250</td>
<td>$26,500</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
<td>$10,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne</td>
<td>$20,750</td>
<td>$40,909</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>$20,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
<td>$16,786</td>
<td>$27,500</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>$10,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell</td>
<td>$22,500</td>
<td>$28,750</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>$6,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell</td>
<td>$10,313</td>
<td>$37,750</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>$27,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon</td>
<td>$18,920</td>
<td>$33,375</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>$14,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>$23,958</td>
<td>$35,313</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>$11,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles</td>
<td>$16,071</td>
<td>$26,806</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>$10,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona</td>
<td>$18,292</td>
<td>$31,852</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>$13,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>$19,531</td>
<td>$44,917</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>$25,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville</td>
<td>$15,163</td>
<td>$29,750</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>$14,587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River</td>
<td>$11,563</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>$18,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$28,750</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>$13,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno</td>
<td>$16,161</td>
<td>$37,768</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>$21,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
<td>$16,016</td>
<td>$27,125</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>$11,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>$16,907</td>
<td>$32,023</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>$15,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>$29,442</td>
<td>$43,791</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>$14,349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census (Not adjusted for inflation)

### Table 9: Per Capita Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
<td>$11,646</td>
<td>$15,643</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>$ 3,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne</td>
<td>$ 7,798</td>
<td>$18,169</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>$ 10,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
<td>$ 9,461</td>
<td>$18,266</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
<td>$ 8,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell</td>
<td>$ 4,938</td>
<td>$ 9,089</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>$ 4,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
<td>$15,560</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>$ 4,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon</td>
<td>$ 8,661</td>
<td>$14,933</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>$ 6,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>$ 9,962</td>
<td>$17,280</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>$ 7,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles</td>
<td>$10,742</td>
<td>$17,830</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>$ 7,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona</td>
<td>$ 8,414</td>
<td>$15,652</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>$ 7,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>$ 8,760</td>
<td>$21,602</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
<td>$12,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville</td>
<td>$ 8,157</td>
<td>$16,013</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td>$ 7,856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River</td>
<td>$ 6,589</td>
<td>$13,866</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>$ 7,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>$ 8,945</td>
<td>$17,361</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
<td>$ 8,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno</td>
<td>$ 8,525</td>
<td>$16,809</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>$ 8,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
<td>$ 7,597</td>
<td>$14,757</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
<td>$ 7,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>$ 8,339</td>
<td>$16,451</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>$ 8,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>$13,286</td>
<td>$21,271</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>$ 7,985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census (Not adjusted for inflation)
1.3 Issues and Opportunities

A. Planning Issues

A variety of issues were identified throughout the planning process. Many of these were brought up during the planning meetings, others were taken from existing documents, and some were taken from public meetings. These issues will be listed by topic in the following chapters of the plan.

B. Chapter Format

All of the following chapters, except the last, are organized into three basic sections:

1. Background...provides some general information and reviews previous plans and related information.

2. Inventory & Trends ...reviews a variety of historic, current and future data, and includes maps.

3. Goals, Objectives and Policies...see below.

C. Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Each of the following comprehensive plan chapters will conclude with a set of goals, objectives and policies, which are used to guide the opportunity of future development in Forest County.

For purposes of this planning process, goals, objectives and policies are defined as follows:

Goals: Broad statements that express general public priorities about how the community should approach development issues during the next 20 years. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community.

Objectives: More specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.

Policies: Rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a regular basis.
Chapter 2: Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources
CHAPTER 2:
NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

2.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................... Page 1

2.2 Natural Resources ................................................................................................. Page 2
   A. Background
   B. Inventory and Trends
   C. Goals, Objectives & Policies

2.3 Agricultural Resources .......................................................................................... Page 25
   A. Background
   B. Inventory and Trends
   C. Goals, Objectives & Policies

2.4 Cultural Resources ................................................................................................. Page 30
   A. Background
   B. Inventory and Trends
   C. Goals, Objectives & Policies

Tables:
Table 1: Lakes Over 100 Acres
Table 2: Outstanding and Exceptional Water Resources
Table 3: Forestland
Table 4A: Farmland
Table 4B: Farms by Size
Table 5: Cropland by Crop Type
Table 6: Agricultural Land Sales

Maps:
Map 2-1: Natural Resources
Map 2-2: Generalized Soils
2.1 Introduction

This is the second of nine chapters that comprise the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. This chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.”

The chapter is organized into three main components: natural resources, agriculture, and cultural resources. Each component is then divided into the three basic sections:

- Background
- Inventory & Trends
- Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Although these components are separated, they are all interrelated. For example, the location of agricultural uses described in the “Agriculture” component of this chapter is based upon the soil and water information in the “Natural Resources” component. Similarly, this chapter relates to the other eight chapters as well. As a result, the information provided by this chapter will be referenced in other chapters.
2.2. Natural Resources

A. Background

Forest County in northeastern Wisconsin is bounded 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.

The county’s total area is about 654,500 acres (2009 assessment rolls), with about 22,392 acres of which is surface water. The county contains 824 lakes, and 710 miles of rivers and streams. The topography of Forest County is of glacial origin, and is underlain by bedrock that makes up the southern extension of the Canadian Shield. Forests cover about 84 percent of the county and provide raw materials, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. About 59 percent of the county is publicly owned land, including 348,644 acres in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Forest County's Forestry and Recreation Department manages 11,578 acres of county forestland in 2010. The County Forest is sustainably managed, as certified by a third party. Management balances local needs through integration of forestry, wildlife, fisheries, endangered resources, water quality, soil conservation, and recreational recommendations and practices. Many trails are found in the county and national forests for snowmobiling, biking, and hiking with new miles of ATV trails being added annually.

Agriculture exists throughout Forest County, mainly of forage crops and animal husbandry and various other uses.

1. Previous Planning Efforts

County Efforts:

Forest County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2006

This Plan provides a framework for local/state/federal conservation program implementation efforts. Implementation of this plan will help protect and improve the valuable water and soil natural resources in Forest County. Some of the plan’s recommendations include: promoting well planned development, slowing the spread of invasive species, reducing phosphorus loading to waters, protecting shorelands, and reducing erosion from construction sites. A copy is available in the Forest County Land Conservation Department.
Forest County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2006-2020

The mission of the County Forest is to manage, conserve and protect the natural resources within the county forest on a sustainable basis for present and future generations. The Plan contains information about forest resource planning, outdoor recreation planning, silvicultural practices, aesthetic management zones, trails and access control, biological communities, and wildlife species that exist within the county forest. A copy is available in the Forest County Forestry Department or online at www.co.forest.wi.gov.

Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2007-2011

The primary purpose of this recreation plan is to provide continued direction in meeting the current and future recreation needs of residents in the County. This direction takes the form of an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities followed by establishing recommendations to meet identified needs. Adoption of this plan and its subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) allows for continued eligibility for financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), the Stewardship Fund, and many other federal and state funding programs. Some of the recommendations of this plan include: completing the Nicolet State Trail, possible relocation of the fairgrounds, possibly add ATV or snowmobile trail connections across county forest lands when trails are created on private land, and cooperation with the Potawatomi to preserve Otter Springs shelter. A copy is available in the Forest County Forestry Department.

County Ordinances

In addition to these planning efforts there are several county ordinances in place related to natural resources. These include the Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance, Private Onsite Waste Treatment System Ordinance, land and water conservation standards for the Farmland Preservation Program, Nuisance Ordinance, Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, the General Zoning Ordinance, the Forest County Snowmobile-ATV Ordinance, County Park Ordinance, and the County Forest Ordinance.

State Efforts:

Headwaters (Upper Wisconsin) Integrated Basin Plan, 2002

The Headwaters Integrated Basin Plan (also called the "Headwaters State of the Basin Report") provides a snapshot of the current conditions of land and water resources in the basin. This effort inventoried and assessed the land and water resource conditions, identified major issues, priorities and objectives, and recommended action.
Some of the recommendations of this plan include: protection and restoration of shoreline, identification of critical habitats, wetland protection and restoration, monitor nonmetallic mining effects on water quality, and encourage wellhead protection plans. A copy is available in the NCWRPC, and in the DNR Rhinelander Service Center.

Statewide Forest Plan, 2004

Wisconsin's latest Statewide Forest Plan identifies a common vision for the state's forest resources and a framework for achieving that vision. It incorporates the full range of trends and issues affecting Wisconsin's forests and their ecological, economic and social implications, and developed a variety of standards. In addition to forestry standards, some others areas relate to water resources, minerals and fish & wildlife. The plan also is a call to all interested parties to address the challenges facing Wisconsin's forests both now and in the future. A copy is available from the WDNR Division of Forestry online at: http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/forestry/assessment.

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.

Segment 2—Forest Co. to Michigan, Nicolet State Trail (Northern Region)
The DNR has acquired the Nicolet State Trail corridor from Gillett north to the Michigan state border. The 32 mile long segment through Forest County has been completed in 2009 as a multiuse, multiseason trail including hiking, biking, snowmobiles and ATV’s as approved trail uses.

Segment 13—Dresser to Michigan
This statewide 250-mile-long east-west corridor consists of rail line, and an optional highway right-of-way. In Forest County, this rail corridor runs through Argonne, Cavour, and Armstrong Creek between the communities of Rhinelander and Goodman. In late 2009 this rail corridor was "red lined." Segment 56, and Segment 2 both intersect with this rail corridor.

Segment 56—Argonne to Shawano (Wolf River State Trail)
This corridor runs along the east shore of Lake Metonga at Crandon, then runs south through forestland connecting to Langlade County's segment.
Forest County’s 14.4-mile long corridor will be completed in the summer of 2010 for hiking, biking, snowmobiling, and ATV use.

**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.

A copy is available from the WDNR Wisconsin State Parks online at: http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/ORG/LAND/parks/reports/trails/#contents.

**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 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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CN Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest</th>
<th>PE Peshtigo River</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection Initiated</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection Remaining</td>
<td>Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Significance</td>
<td>★★★★☆☆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Potential</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection Initiated</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection Remaining</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Significance</td>
<td>★★★☆☆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Potential</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Laona Hemlock Hardwoods (LH) are locally known as the Connor Forest. It is interesting to note that the Connor Forest (Laona Hemlock Hardwoods) has been managed longer than the Nicolet side of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.

A copy is available at WDNR Service Centers or online at: http://dnr.wi.gov/Master_Planning/land_legacy.

Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, 2004

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. Four major revision topics were addressed: Access and Recreational Opportunities; Biological Diversity; Special Land Allocations; and Timber Production.

It is recognized that no alternative could have been developed that would satisfy all of the interested publics, due to the diverse values and views on the highest and best use of these Forests. However, the selected alternative provides the best opportunity to improve ecological conditions while providing a broad spectrum of recreational opportunities and a realistic level of commodity production (USDA, 2004b). The 2004 Land and Resource Management Plan will serve as the guide for resource managers for the next 10 to 15 years.

2. Issues

- Industrial Forest Fragmentation

Corporate forests are selling 40-acre parcels to individuals. Many new owners are avid motorized trail users, but they are closing public trail access to their newly purchased property. This fragmentation also reduces the amount of timber available to the timber industry in the County which reduces potential for economic development which requires raw material.
• Lack of Harvesting in National Forest

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest created their 15-year forest management plan in 2004 that includes harvesting among other resource management objectives. However, very little harvesting is occurring. The actual harvest of the Nicolet National Forest within Forest County is much lower than the amount shown in the National Forest Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) and this amount is far below the annual allowable harvest as calculated through extensive research at the Argonne Experimental Forest. The resulting reductions in timber harvest from the Nicolet National Forest reduce forest health as well as reducing the amount of raw material available for economic use in Forest County. This reduced raw material supply also reduces economic development potential in the timber industry sector.

B. Inventory and Trends

Understanding the natural resources of Forest County is an essential component of planning for the future. The County's resources represent both the potential and the limiting constraints on development and change. The natural resources of Forest County are comprised of many elements such as topography, soils, mineral deposits, ground and surface waters, woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife. These elements continue to provide the stage for development and exert pressures that greatly influence the direction and form future development will take. For example, constraints in the form of unsuitable soils, and steep slopes may preclude the use of an area for certain agricultural pursuits.

Achieving balance and harmony between the preservation and use of the county’s natural resources is one of the primary goals of comprehensive planning. Sound decisions about future development depend upon knowledge of the supply, demand and intrinsic value of the County’s resources. If properly sustained, the resource base will continue to be a major economic and recreational asset to its residents and visitors.

1. 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 10 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.

2. Landscape

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.

3. Soils

There are 39 different soil types in Forest County identified in the County Soil Survey. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency that produced the Forest County Soil Survey. The survey contains predictions of soil behavior for selected land uses and also highlights the limitations and hazards inherent in the County’s soil. A series of detailed maps identifying the location of soil types in Forest County accompanies the survey. The survey also contains detailed descriptions of each soil type, and includes tables to determine suitability and limitations. Detailed soils maps are available for Forest County online at: www.nrcs.usda.gov, or contact the Forest County Land and Water Conservation office.

These soil associations demonstrate the relationship between soil types and characteristics to the various types of development or use. Residential, commercial, and industrial buildings are limited by shallow depth to bedrock which restricts foundation depth or increases construction costs; by high water
tables which cause wet basements and are often found with unstable soils; and by land with steep slopes which hampers commercial and industrial uses more than residential.

Soils and soil conditions greatly affect certain types of development. Depth to bedrock, poor filtration capabilities, slow water percolation, wetness, ponding, susceptibility to erosion (slope), and subsidence are all factors that make development activities difficult. These types of soils are generally found in wetlands, on hillsides, and in shallow soils overlying bedrock. Due to their fragile nature, destruction of vegetative cover on such soils can trigger damage from wind and gully erosion.

A generalized soil map is included in this plan that displays the broad soil associations. 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. Most of the soils in the county formed under forest vegetation. See Map 2-2.

4. Metallic and Nonmetallic Resources

Forest County contains some significant non-metallic deposits, and as such, several quarries are in operation. The Crandon Mine deposit (owned by the Potawatomi and Mole Lake Communities) is a zinc-copper ore body near the City of Crandon.

There are about 18 open non-metallic mining operations that are greater than 1 acre in size in Forest County. The Non-Metallic Mine Reclamation Ordinance assures that lands opened to mining are reclaimed to near pre-mine conditions, or to some other pre-determined final use. Any new mine would be subject to the reclamation standards under this ordinance.

5. Surface Water

Forest County has 824 lakes covering 22,324 acres, and streams with a total length over 710 miles and a surface area of about 1,770 acres. The majority of these streams are classified as trout waters. Surface water is used mainly for recreation, stock watering, and wildlife. See the Natural Resources Map.

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, which is a natural state.

Surface water is an important resource to Forest County, however it is threatened by both point and non-point source pollution. Nonpoint source pollution, often the result of stormwater runoff and erosion, is pollution that cannot be traced to a single source, and can come from roadways, parking lots, farm fields and construction sites. The more of these impervious surfaces the greater the runoff that is carried into the waterways.

The Wisconsin State Legislature created the Wisconsin Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Abatement Program (NPS) in 1978 (§281.66, Wis. Stats.). The goal of the NPS Program is to improve and protect the water quality of streams, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater by reducing pollutants from agricultural and residential non-point sources. The WDNR and DATCP administer the program, which focuses on critical hydrologic units called priority watersheds. The program is implemented through priority watershed projects led by local units of government. Landowners, land renters, counties, cities, villages, towns, sewer districts, sanitary districts, lake districts, and regional planning commissions are eligible to participate.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), per requirements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), maintains a list of water bodies that do not currently meet water quality standards under the Clean Water Act. This list is commonly known as the "303(d) list," corresponding to the applicable subsection of the Clean Water Act. The WDNR is required to update the list every two years.

Forest County has five water bodies appearing on the 2008 303(d) list. The following lakes are on the list because of mercury contamination from atmospheric deposition: Abutus, Deep Hole, Julia, Kentuck, and Little Sand. The DNR issues fish consumption advisories based upon atmospheric mercury pollution.
The WDNR also maintains a list of Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs). An outstanding resource water is defined as a lake or stream which has excellent water quality, high recreational and aesthetic value, and high quality fishing and is free from point source or nonpoint source pollution. An exceptional resource water is defined as a stream which exhibits the same high quality resource values as outstanding waters, but which may be impacted by point source pollution or have the potential for future discharge from a small sewer community. See Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lake Name</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Township</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birch Lake</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>Laona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop Lake</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogbrook Impoundment</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butternut Lake</td>
<td>1,292</td>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Lake</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay Meadow Flowage</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilbert Lake (Onwig)</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles Mill Pond</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Lake</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentuck Lake</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily Lake</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Rice Lake</td>
<td>1,219</td>
<td>Crandon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Sand Lake</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Lake</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>Popple River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucerne Lake (Stone)</td>
<td>1,026</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metonga Lake</td>
<td>2,157</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickerel Lake</td>
<td>1,299</td>
<td>Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Lake</td>
<td>1,670</td>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice Lake</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riley Lake</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>Laona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberts Lake</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scattered Rice Lake</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>Laona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevenmile Lake</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>Hiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Lake</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>Laona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevens Lake</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>Alvin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabikon Lake</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>Laona</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WDNR, 24k Hydro, 2000; and Wisconsin Lakes book.
## Table 2: Forest County Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waterbody</th>
<th>Portion of waterbody classified ORW or ERW</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brule Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brule River</td>
<td>Florence Co. line up to Brule Lake</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butternut Lake</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elvoy Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Lake</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Rice Lake</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucerne Lake (Stone)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metonga Lake</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otter Creek (North Otter Creek)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peshtigo River</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine River</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S Branch Pine River</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S Branch Popple River</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnamed headwater branch to Popple River</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolf River</td>
<td>From the outlet of Pine Lake to the Oneida County line</td>
<td>ORW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bills Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp 20 Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp 8 Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gliske Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gruman Creek</td>
<td>USFS Rd 2454</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huff Creek</td>
<td>County line upstream to USFS Rd 2454</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Creek (S24 T34N R15E)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson Creek</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowles Creek</td>
<td>USFS Rd 2169 to Lilypad Lake</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilypad Creek</td>
<td>USFS Rd 2166 to Popple River</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Popple River</td>
<td>S Br Pine River to USFS Rd 2177</td>
<td>ERW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald Creek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wisconsin DNR, NCWRPC
6. **Wetlands**

Wetlands are important for groundwater aquifer recharge, wildlife habitat, and serving social functions such as open space, recreation, and aesthetics. They also act as water storage “sponges” in times of high water by absorbing excess water and then releasing it back into the watershed slowly, thereby preventing flooding and minimizing flood damage. Wetlands have valuable ground and surface water purification capabilities since potentially harmful compounds and bacteria in the water are absorbed into plant tissues thus buffering the adjacent water body. Wetlands occur in areas where the water level is usually near or above the soil surface. Wetlands cover nearly 150,000 acres of land throughout the county.

Swamps, bogs, marshes, potholes, wet meadows, and sloughs are all considered wetlands. The soils in these areas are usually saturated within a few inches of the surface during the growing season and need some type of artificial drainage to be made arable. Besides their ecological value, wetlands are also an important recreational, educational, and aesthetic resource. Wetlands are a breeding and nesting ground for waterfowl and for many other animals depending upon aquatic habitats. Maintaining these breeding grounds ensures a variety and adequate amount of game for hunting and wildlife observation. Sometimes a particular chain of wetlands can be home to a rare or endangered species thereby provoking interest from scientists and educators. Lastly, the visual appearance of the wetlands themselves can constitute a

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**Table 2: continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forest County Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Waterbody</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Branch Peshtigo River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Branch Oconto River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Branch Peshtigo River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Branch Popple River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninemile Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninemile Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky Siding Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spencer Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoney Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Branch Armstrong Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson Creek</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wisconsin DNR, NCWRPC
scenic resource. Historically, the greatest threats to wetlands in the County have been agricultural drainage and urban development.

The DNR identifies the location of wetlands on their Wisconsin Wetland Inventory maps and associated database. According to this database, Forest County has about 149,230 acres of wetlands, which also includes wooded wetlands. Significant concentrations of wetlands in Forest County include areas in central Hiles, central Argonne, Town of Crandon, northern part of Lincoln, Armstrong Creek, Ross, and Caswell. Additional wetlands are associated with the floodplains, and smaller wetlands are scattered throughout the County.

7. Floodplains

Floodplains are a natural flood control system that provides an area where excess water can be accommodated. The extent to which a floodplain may become inundated depends upon the amount of water, the speed and distance that the water travels, and the topography of the area. Forest County contains approximately 22,278 acres of floodplain, some of which are also wetlands. See the Natural Resources Map.

Floods are one of Wisconsin’s the most common types of natural disasters. Each year Wisconsin communities suffer millions of dollars in flood damages. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates floodplain areas in the state. These are areas predicted to be inundated with floodwaters in the 100-year storm event (e.g., a storm that has about a 1% chance of happening in any given year, or a 26% chance of happening over a 30-year period).

Given that these areas are prone to flooding, development in floodplains is usually discouraged. Even so, development does occur in these areas and in turn affects the ability of this system to function properly.

Chapter NR 116 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code requires all municipalities to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances for the purpose of protecting individuals, private property, and public investments from flood damage. Floodplain zoning regulates development in the floodway and flood fringe areas, usually by requiring structures to be built above flood levels or be otherwise flood-protected. For regulatory purposes, a floodplain is generally defined as land where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any year (also known as the 100-year floodplain). Floodplain regulation can also keep communities eligible for the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). FEMA offers emergency monetary assistance to flood stricken communities provided these areas are in compliance with NFIP requirements and have also completed a Flood Insurance Study. Currently, Forest County, and the City of Crandon all
participate in the NFIP program, have completed the Flood Insurance Study, and have created a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) that delineates those areas likely to be inundated by a 100-year flood (also known as “A” Zones). The Tribal lands are not covered by these maps.

8. Watersheds

Forest County is divided into 9 watersheds and two drainage basins. 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. See Section 5: Surface Water, for more analysis of the drainage system.

9. Groundwater Resources

Ground-water resources supply most of the water used in Forest County. It is readily available in quantities necessary to meet domestic, agricultural, municipal, and industrial needs.

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 are 30 to 300 feet deep.

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.

Groundwater generally discharges at streams, marshes, lakes, and springs or as underflow, which provides the continued base level flow for perennial streams during long dry periods. Urban groundwater uses in the County are approaching 30 million gallons (PSC online) annually from the three municipal water systems (Crandon, Laona, and Wabeno) combined.

The quality of ground water in Forest County is generally good. The water in the aquifers is principally a calcium magnesium bicarbonate type that 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.
Groundwater quality can be impaired by a variety of pollutants including leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs), landfills, septic tanks, over-application of pesticides and fertilizers, and spills of hazardous chemicals. The most common contaminants found in Wisconsin’s groundwater are pesticides, nitrates, nitrogen, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These contaminants come from a multitude of sources including nitrogen-based fertilizers, septic systems, animal waste storage, feedlots, municipal and industrial wastewater discharges, and sludge disposal. Groundwater contaminants can affect the health of humans, livestock, and wildlife. Because groundwater seeps more slowly than surface runoff, pollution that occurs today may not become evident for several years. Once polluted, the groundwater is very difficult to purify and may take many years to clean itself by the dilution process.

10. Forests

At one time, much of Wisconsin was covered with magnificent stands of pine, hemlock, and hardwoods on the highlands, and cedar, spruce, and balsam on its lowlands. From 1860 to about 1910, these forests provided raw material for a thriving lumber industry. The need to supply lumber for a growing nation, and the lack of sound forest management, resulted in over harvest of the forests and degradation of the landscape. Immigrants rushed to these newly cleared lands, hungry for a place to farm and build their lives. But in just a few years, the soils gave out, catastrophic fires occurred, and many people were forced to seek their fortunes elsewhere. The land was left exhausted of timber and tax delinquent. The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest was created from tax delinquent land to receive the protection and reforestation necessary to return them to their original productiveness.

Woodlands covered approximately 564,100 acres of the county in 2006. By 2009, there were 608,945 acres of woodlands covering Forest County. Under the Forest Crop Law (FCL) 6,941 acres are open to the public to hunt and fish in 2006. There are 102,480 acres, in 2006, enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program that are open to the public for hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, sightseeing, and hiking, and 22,334 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.

Designed to forward the objectives of the FCL program, the MFL program was enacted in 1986. To qualify for MFL enrollment, the forestland must be at least 10 contiguous acres and participating landowners must adopt a forest management plan. In exchange, their land is assessed for tax purposes at a rate below the state average.
Table 3 displays information on the amount of forestland and type of ownership in Forest County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>492,158</td>
<td>560,828</td>
<td>548,135</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>55,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>15,351,300</td>
<td>15,964,800</td>
<td>16,037,233</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>685,933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The change in forest cover over time can be an important indicator of how sustainable forestry activities are within the county. From 1983 to 2004, forested land within Forest County has generally increased by 55,977 acres or 11.4%. This increase in forested land follows a similar trend throughout the state of Wisconsin. Forest cover is typically quantified by a ground level forest inventory or by using satellite imagery data.

Currently in Forest County there are 348,644 acres of forestland owned by the federal government as part of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest; 23,538 acres owned by the state of Wisconsin mainly as state natural, fishery, or wildlife areas; the county owns 11,578 acres, and local governments own 4,445 acres. Forest County has vast amounts of forest and the past industry revolved around the use of the forest products and timber for economic development. The forest of the county is the primary factor in which the economy revolves around whether it is the tourism industry or the timber industry. Any actions which reduce access to the forest—or limits sustainable timber harvesting have a negative effect on the current and future economic potential of Forest County.

Woodland plays a key role in the protection of environmentally sensitive areas like steep slopes, shorelands, wetlands, and flood plains. Removal of woodland cover can be detrimental to these areas in both ecological functions and to visual enjoyment. The health of a forest is measured by its capacity for renewal, for recovery from a wide range of disturbances, and for retention of its ecological resiliency. At the same time it must meet current and future needs of people for desired levels of values, uses, products, and services. Arguably, invasive exotic species like garlic mustard and multiflora rose present the greatest threat to the long-term health and integrity of the forests. Invasive plants present a problem for native plants as they invade natural systems, often dominating a community by competing for nutrients, sunlight and space, and by altering the food web or physical environment. Invasive species like the Gypsy moth and the Asian long-horned beetle can prey on native species.
a. Forest 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.

b. School Forests

The Crandon School District owns and maintains several school forests that are listed below. Contact the Crandon School District for rules of use on school forest lands.
- 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;

The Laona School District owns and maintains two school forests listed below. Contact the Laona School District for rules of use on school forest lands.
- Newald School Forest, 40 acres, SW1/4 SE1/4, S1 T37E R14E;
- Laona School Forest, 63 acres, N1/2 NW1/4, S6 T35N R15E;

The Wabeno School District owns and maintains the school forest listed below. Contact the Wabeno School District for rules of use on school forest lands.
- Wabeno School Forest, 40 acres, SE1/4 SW1/4, S16 T34N R15E.

c. Town Forests

The Town of Armstrong Creek owns 395.2 acres of land and the Town of Wabeno owns 80 acres of land surrounded by National Forest.

d. National Forest

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest covers about half of the land within Forest County (348,644 acres). This land is managed for multiple uses, and is managed and harvested. Some of the Forest is closed to motorized vehicles. Extensive recreational opportunities within the Forest, for example: eleven campgrounds, fourteen non-motorized trails, snowmobile trails, and scenic driving opportunities.

e. State Forest

Two State of Wisconsin entities manage plots of land in Forest County: DNR and the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands. Combined, these agencies maintain 23,538 acres of forested land.
11. Wildlife & Natural Areas

The State of Wisconsin, primarily through the Department of Natural Resources, holds several tracts of land within Forest County. This land is open to the public for a variety of uses. Boundary signs posted near parking lots and along borders explain the uses on that parcel.

**State Wildlife Areas (SWA)**

SWA were acquired to preserve habitat for wildlife. The following State wildlife area exists in Forest County:

Little Rice Wildlife Area is 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)**

SNA 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. Generally, natural areas are remnant areas that largely have escaped disturbances since settlement or which exhibit little recent disturbance so that recovery has occurred and presettlement conditions are approached.

Natural areas provide an important reservoir of our state's genetic or biologic diversity. They act as important reserves for native biotic communities and provide habitat for endangered, threatened, or critical species or other species of special concern to scientists. They often include areas with highly significant geological or archeological features. They tend not to have much facility development, though there may be a designated trail or two on site. Some properties allow limited hunting.

Forest County has six state natural areas. They are:

- **Scott Lake and Shelp Lake SNA (No. 117)** is 272 acres located in the Town of Hiles (T38N R12E).
- **Giant White Pine Grove SNA (No. 118)** is 30 acres located in the Town of Hiles (T38N R12E).
- **Bose Lake Hemlock-Hardwoods SNA (No. 119)** is 25 acres located in the Town of Hiles (T40N R12E).
- **Atkins Lake SNA (No. 238)** is 541 acres located in the Town of Hiles (T37N R11E).
- **Bastile Lake SNA (No. 302)** is 156 acres located in the Town of Popple River.
McCaslin Mountain SNA (No. 307) is 408 acres located in the Town of Wabeno (T34N R16E).

Federal Wilderness Area
Forest County has one wilderness area, which is the federal version of the state natural areas program:

Headwaters Wilderness Area – 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.

12. Threatened and Endangered Species

Forest County contains a wide range of plant and wildlife habitats. These natural habitats have been greatly affected by rural development and agricultural practices. In most cases, these influences are directly responsible for the endangerment or threatening of certain species. The Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires all federal agencies to conserve endangered and threatened species. The State of Wisconsin has similar statutes.

Wisconsin law prohibits the “taking” of any plant or animal listed as endangered or threatened. Taking is defined as the act of killing, harming, collecting, capturing, or harassing a member of a protected species. The WDNR-Bureau of Endangered species operates the Wisconsin’s Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI), which maintains data on the location and status of rare species, natural communities, and natural features in Wisconsin.

WDNR’s Natural Heritage Inventory program maintains data on the general location and status of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species in the state. This data is obtained through field inventory. According to that inventory, Forest County has 386 land sections with occurrences of aquatic and terrestrial plants, animals, and/or natural communities of endangered status as identified in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory. Each section identified may have several different species or just one species. Forest County has more rare species occurrences than other surrounding counties. See Rare Species & Natural Areas Map.

Forest County has twenty-two species that are threatened or endangered. The Gray Wolf (Canis lupus) is listed as the federal endangered species for Forest County. There are six endangered species listed in the state: Little Goblin Moonwort (Botrychium mormo), Northern Blue (Lycaeides idas), Dwarf Huckleberry (Vaccinium cespitosum), Mountain Cranberry (Vaccinium vitis-
Adopted - 2011

idaea ssp. Minus), Extra-striped Snaketail (Ophiogomphus anomalus), American Marten (Martes Americana). There are 15 threatened species listed in the state: Spruce Grouse (Falcipennis Canadensis), Yellow Rail (Caturnicops noveboracensis), Fairy Slipper (Calypso bulbosa), Osprey (Pandion haliaetus), Blanding's Turtle (Emydoidea blandingii), Wood Turtle (Glyptemys insculpta), Braun's Holly-fern (Polystichum braunii), Cerulean Warbler (Dendroica cerulea), Algae-like Pondweed (Potamogeton confervoides), Red-shouldered Hawk (Buteo lineatus), Arrow-leaved Sweet-coltisfoot (Petasites sagittatus), Plains Ragwort (Senecio indecorus), Pygmy Snaketail (Ophiogomphus howei), Round-leaved Orchis (Amerorchis rotundifolia), Michaux Sedge (Carex michauxiana) are bird species that are fully protected under the Migratory Bird Act. The bald eagle is no longer listed, but is now protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Several other species of plants and animals are listed as rare species, but there are no laws in place to protect them.

13. Environmentally Sensitive Areas/Ecological Landscapes

The presence of surface water, floodways, wetlands, and steep slopes creates situations where some locations are less suitable for development than others. These less suitable areas are often referred to as “environmentally sensitive areas” due to the generally negative impact development in these areas has on the environment. As a rule, the areas where development is most harmful are the same areas where development is most difficult or expensive. For example, building a house on the edge of a steep hillside requires expensive footings and erosion control measures to prevent the structure from falling. At the same time, the removal of trees and dirt for construction can compromise the integrity of the cliff and cause more stormwater erosion or landslides thus harming the entire hill itself.

Ecological Landscapes were created as a WDNR handbook for resource managers to assist with their ecological assessment of an area, and to help determine sustainable uses. The northern half of the County lies in the ecological landscape known as the North Central Forest, while the southern area lies in the Forest Transition landscape.

14. Air Resources

Air quality in Forest County meets National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for the six principal pollutants monitored: carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), ozone (O₃), particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM₂.₅), and sulfur dioxide (SO₂).

Even so, there are sources of localized air pollution that are cause for concern, such as carbon monoxide from vehicle exhausts in attached garages, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) located in paints and solvents that dry quickly, and wood burning. Incomplete combustion from outdoor wood boilers and wood
furnaces create particulate matter (PM$_{10}$ and PM$_{2.5}$), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), dioxins and furans, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds and metals into the air we breathe.

In 2008, the U.S. EPA granted the Forest County Potawatomi Community a "Class I" air redesignation for Reservation parcels located within the Towns of Wabeno, Blackwell, and Lincoln. The protected airshed extends in a 62-mile radius from Reservation parcels (FR Doc. E8-8970).

C. **Goals, Objectives & Policies**

**Goals:**

1. Protect the County’s natural features, including lakes, open space, wetlands, wildlife habitat, woodlands, and unique physical areas.

2. Protect large tract woodlands and enhance County Forests.

3. Reduce contamination of surface and groundwater resources in the County.

4. Encourage and support the preservation of natural areas that minimize flooding, such as grasslands, wetlands and woodlands.

5. Allow for needed non-metallic mining while balancing the interests of adjacent landowners and the County.

6. Enhance and promote sustainable multiple use forest management to benefit the forest industry and improve opportunities for tourism based industry. Work to exclude non-sustainable forest management strategies including no management zones, improper harvesting techniques, or extended rotation harvesting which result in loss of forest health and productivity. These practices put the forest of the neighboring landowners at risk from forest insects, disease and wildfire as well as reducing the raw material supply for the timber industry.

7. Preserve, protect and enhance surface water quality within the County by protecting shorelands and wetlands which provide the natural filters for surface water and protecting from invasive aquatic species introductions. Provide for proper and adequate accesses to lakes and streams for their tourism value. Preservation of water quality will preserve the tourism value of the water resources and maintain future potential of this industry.
8. Support land management practices on the Nicolet National Forest, Industrial Forests, and other lands in the county which provide habitat improvements for white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, wild turkey, black bear and waterfowl.

Objectives:

1. New development should not negatively impact natural resources.
2. Protect surface water, groundwater, and shoreline quality.
3. Identify the critical natural resources, such as lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and woodlands.
4. Promote opportunities that support both natural resource protection and economic development.
5. Encourage the development of a natural area network connecting open areas, wetlands, and woodlands.
6. Integrate and implement the County Forest Comprehensive Plan.
7. Balance access to natural areas with resource protection efforts.
8. Promote groundwater protection efforts to maintain and lower nitrate, pesticide, and volatile organic compound pollution.
10. Promote proper reclamation techniques in the County for non-metallic mineral mining sites.
11. Minimize impacts to the County’s natural resources from non-metallic mineral mining.
12. Encourage proper forest management on National Forest Lands, Wisconsin Managed Forest Law Lands and Industrial Forest Lands within the County. Maintain raw material supply by promotion of sustainable cutting levels to the calculated annual allowable cut on the National Forest Lands.
13. Encourage multiple use forest management on all forest land including uses such as standard multiple uses including hunting, fishing, hiking, and biking as well as wildlife management for game species and
motorized recreation including snowmobiles and ATV’s to create opportunities to diversify our economy into the tourism based industries.

14. Provide adequate, natural resource friendly water access points to all lakes and streams and landings to maintain public use of water resources and maintain the tourism industry value.

15. Discourage introduction of aquatic invasive species by providing education and support to lake associations in their efforts to limit this disturbance to the surface waters.

Policies:

1. Work cooperatively with the WDNR and other forestry agencies and organizations in sponsoring workshops and educational materials regarding sound forest management practices and programs.

2. Implement the policies as identified in the County’s Comprehensive Forest Plan.

3. Explore the development of a destination Motorized Recreational Area compatible with surrounding natural resources.

4. Work with federal, state, and local governments to manage natural resources throughout the county.

5. Reduce and actively seek to reduce eutropication of our wetlands, lakes and streams.

6. Officially request the National Forest to maintain harvest levels on Forest County lands at their highest calculated annual allowable cut for sustainable forestry to provide sustained raw material flow for industry in the County.

7. Discourage forest management set-asides which limit raw material supply and limit recreational value of lands. Examples of these include non-motorized areas and wilderness areas.

8. Establish formal meetings with US Forest Service and the County Forestry Committee to have input into the determination of the annual allowable cut and other issues related to the National Forest lands within the County.
2.3 AGRICULTURE

A. Background

Farming in Forest County had its origin in the need for agricultural products by the lumber companies. In 1890, there were 47 farms in the county and the average farm size was 171 acres. By 1910, the number of farms had increased to 237 and the average farm size was 119 acres; by 1935, the county had 915 farms with an average size of 100 acres. After that period, the number of farms in Forest County began to decline dramatically. In 1950, the county had a total of 652 farms and the average size was 133 acres according to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, 1957. By 1990, Forest County had only 140 farms, and the average size was over 214 acres according to the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service, 1991.

1. Previous Planning Efforts

Forest County Agricultural Preservation Plan

This plan was adopted in 1983. The Forest County Agricultural Preservation Plan is intended to address the loss of productive farmland. The planning process identified agricultural problems for the purpose of formulating goals and policies. Standards were developed to delineate five main planning districts: Farmland Preservation Areas, Secondary Agricultural Areas, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Urban Transition Areas, and Exclusion Areas.

The Preservation Plan defines prime soils as those designated Group I or II by the Soil Conservation Service (NRCS) and feasibly irrigable. The plan specifically mentions the importance of not confusing prime soils with the definition of prime farmland. Prime soils are based upon the physical properties of the land. Prime farmland takes into account, in addition to soils, other factors such as type, size, and locality of agricultural operations. A copy is available in the Forest County Land Conservation Department.

NRCS Soil Survey for Forest County, 2004

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency that prepared the Forest County, Wisconsin Soil Survey. The survey contains predictions of soil behavior for selected land uses and also highlights the limitations and hazards inherent in the county’s soil. A series of detailed maps identifying the location of soil types in Forest County accompanies the survey.

A copy is available online at:
http://soils.usda.gov/survey/online_surveys/wisconsin/
County Ordinances

Some related county ordinances include the soil and water conservation standards for the Farmland Preservation Program, and the General Zoning Ordinance.

2. Issues

- Changing farming trends in the county.
- Growth in hobby farms and specialty agriculture.

B. Inventory and Trends

1. Farm Size

Agricultural continues to be a major part of the county. Table 4A provides census data regarding the total amount of farmland and the size of farms in the county and state. Between 1997 and 2007, the county added over 7,600 acres of farmland, while average farm size declined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4A: Forest County Farmlands (acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor Civil Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4B shows the number of farms by size in the county. Between 1997 and 2007, census data indicated that the total number of farms increased from 111 to 173, an increase of 62 or nearly 56 percent.
Table 4B:
Forest County Farms by Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1 to 49</th>
<th>50-179</th>
<th>180-499</th>
<th>500-999</th>
<th>1000 plus</th>
<th>Total Farms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-2007 % Change</td>
<td>163.2%</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>-33.3%</td>
<td>-33.3%</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-2007 Net</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2. Row Crops

Crops grown are used mainly to feed livestock or residents within the county. Table 5 provides historical data on crop production in Forest County.

Oats accounts for the largest share of cropland in Forest County. Table 8 shows acres planted in these crops.

Table 5:
Forest County Cropland by Crop Type (acres)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corn (for grain)</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>526</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


3. Livestock

There is some livestock within the county, mainly dairy and beef. Only two dairy farms are in operation.

4. Aquiculture

Forest County ranks 60th in Wisconsin for farm raised fish. Game fish and baitfish were raised on fish farms in Forest County.
5. **Productive Agricultural Areas**

The most productive agricultural areas may be found in the southern half of the county. These areas are mostly flat and therefore conducive to the use of large farm machinery and the efficient application of chemicals. Areas with high water tables, and steep slopes are less productive for row crop production, but many are suited well for forage and managed pasture. There are still many farms that can make use of small irregular shaped parcels if they are located in close proximity.

6. **Farm Infrastructure**

Farm-to-market roads, commodity storage and processing plants, and implement dealerships are probably the most significant farming infrastructure. Quality roads are absolutely necessary to the farmer for transporting the wholesale farm product to the appropriate market in a timely manner. Farm-to-market roads are discussed in more detail in the Transportation Chapter of this plan. Adequate land and electricity must be available to store and process the harvested crops. Tractors break down, and other implements need replacement parts. The number and type of farms in the county support several businesses in adjacent Langlade County to service modern farm implements. Depending upon the type of farming, irrigation wells may also be extremely important. Irrigation equipment is not a common sight in Forest County since most crops are forage crops that no not need irrigation.

7. **Agricultural Land Values**

Agricultural land values throughout Wisconsin have changed since use-value assessment of farmland was implemented between 2000-2002. Use values for most farmland are grouped into four categories based on relative soil productivity within the county. The Department of Revenue (DOR) determines actual values assigned to farmland in these categories each year for every municipality in the state.

Land and buildings in the farmstead area are assessed at full market value. If agricultural land is converted to another use, the county where the land is located will administer a penalty on the property tax. The DOR will determine the penalty within each county based on the difference between the average per-acre fair market value of agricultural land sold in the county in the previous year and the average per-acre equalized value of agricultural land in the county in the previous year.

The number of agricultural land sale transactions per year has generally remained constant at 2 or fewer per year from 2003 through 2007. Table 6 shows two sample years of farmland transactions. Generally, farmland prices are similar for land that will remain as farmland or be converted to other uses.
C. **Goals, Objectives & Policies**

**Goals:**

1. Protect economically productive farmlands.
2. Eliminate negative impacts related to manure storage.

**Objectives:**

1. Work to preserve farming as a viable occupation within the County.
2. Limit the number of non-farm uses in agricultural areas.
3. Encourage retaining large, contiguous farmland tracts.

**Policies:**

1. See policies as identified in the County’s Land & Water Resource Management Plan.
2. Update Farmland Preservation Plan.
3. Work with local governments to protect agricultural resources.

---

**Table 6:**

**Agricultural Land Sales (Land Without Buildings and Improvements)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Civil Division</th>
<th>Number of transactions</th>
<th>Agricultural land continuing in agricultural use</th>
<th>Agricultural land being diverted to other uses</th>
<th>Total of all agricultural land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>1,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>1,527</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. Background

Before the Civil War, Forest County was primarily inhabited by the Chippewa and other Native Americans, and was visited by traveling fur traders and trappers, most of whom were of French descent or mixed French and Indian heritage.

During the 1860’s, the federal government started construction of what is known as the Military Road. This road connected Green Bay and Fort Wilkins at Copper Harbor on the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula. Previously, rivers had served as the highways to this section of northeastern Wisconsin. Military Road made travel through Forest County easier, but marketing of its principal resource, hardwood timber, had to wait for improved markets for hardwood lumber and rail service to transport the lumber. Unlike the pine that was logged elsewhere, the heavier hardwood logs would not float in the rivers to sawmills downstate.

The Soo Line Railroad bisected Forest County in 1887, and provided rail service to areas adjacent to Argonne, Cavour, and Armstrong Creek, but it was still not profitable to move logs by horse-drawn sleigh for any distance to a railhead. Eventually, the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad, lured by land holdings given to them by the government, pushed rail service into the county. It created a north-south line on the eastern side of the county in the 1890s with a spur into Crandon just after the turn of the century. Sawmills sprang up like mushrooms after a rain and lumber was shipped to build America’s cities. By the 1930s, the timber supply waned and the Great Depression shut down most of the big mills. It was then that residents of what came to be called the “cutover lands” realized the value of the many lakes and miles of streams located in Forest County. The tourist trade joined logging and sawmilling as part of the economic mainstay of the North, and it remains so today.

The history information was taken from: A Capsule of Forest County History, posted in May 2008 at www.forestcountyhistory.org.

1. Previous Planning Efforts

Wisconsin Historic Preservation Plan 2006-2015

The Wisconsin's Historic Preservation Plan for 2006-2015 presents achievable goals and objectives to protect and enhance our state's cultural resources. This plan is the product of collaboration between the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and a number of governmental and non-governmental agencies. It seeks to describe a vision for historic and cultural preservation efforts.
throughout the state. The plan identifies five goals that should be addressed over the next several years:

1. Wisconsin must build a strong network of parties interested in historic preservation.
2. Wisconsin must have a strong educational structure for historic preservation.
3. Preservation must become a core value for Wisconsinites.
4. Wisconsin needs financial stability for preservation activities, ranging from the State Historic Preservation Office to property owners.
5. Citizens and local governments need tools to preserve the state’s most threatened cultural resources.

A copy is available from the Wisconsin Historical Society online at: http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/plan.asp

2. Issues

- No countywide historical group.

- Funding to maintain historical and cultural places in the county.

B. Inventory and Trends

1. Historical Structures

The practice of preserving historic sites and structures recognizes the architectural, engineering, archaeological, cultural, or historic importance of these assets to a community. In 1994, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted statutes requiring cities and villages with property listed in the National Register of Historic Places or the State Register of Historic Places to enact an ordinance to preserve these places.

There are 5 structures in Forest County on the Wisconsin and National Registers of Historic Places: Butternut-Franklin Lakes Archaeological District ca. 7000 BC–1600 AD (Town of Hiles), Camp Five Farmstead ca. 1914 (Town of Laona), Chicago and Northwestern Land Office ca. 1897 (Library in Wabeno), Dinesen-Motzfeldt-Hettinger Log House ca. 1870 (Sokaogon Chippewa Community), Franklin Lake Campground ca. 1936 (Town of Alvin), Otter Spring House ca. 1925 (Town of Lincoln).

The City of Crandon and several towns have more structures listed onto the Architecture and History Inventory (AHI). The City currently has 22
architecturally significant buildings on the state AHI, most of which are homes. Many structures throughout the county are considered historic even though they are not listed on any historical registers. The following buildings are locally historic or are listed on the Architecture and History Inventory:

- Sohr Cabin, Town of Alvin
- Pine Acres Bar, Town of Alvin
- Wisconsin Central Depot, Town of Argonne
- Jones Dam Bridge, Town of Argonne
- Town Bridge, Old Hwy 101, S of USH 8, Town of Armstrong Creek
- Blackwell High School (3695 CTH W); Town of Blackwell
- Frank Michigan log house, Town of Blackwell
- Franklin Lake Campground Shelter and Bathouse, Town of Hiles
- Dutton House (5362 Linden St); Town of Laona
- Camp Five Farmstead (5466 Connor Farm Rd); Town of Laona
- Laona Ranger Dwelling (T36N R14E Sec 36); Town of Laona
- Laona Forest Lookout Tower (T36N R15E Sec 20), Town of Laona
- William Korth House (T36N R13E Sec 19); Town of Lincoln
- Barn (T36N R13E Sec 29); Town of Lincoln
- Laona Ranger dwelling (T36N R13E Sec 26); Town of Lincoln
- Otter Springs Springhouse (T36N R13E Sec 24), Town of Lincoln
- Dinesen-Motzfeldt-Hettinger Log House (T36N R12E Sec 27), Town of Nashville, Sokaogon Chippewa Community
- Lincoln School ca. 1919 (Elm and River Streets); Town of Wabeno
- Chicago and Northwestern Land Office ca. 1897 (currently the library, 4556 W Branch St); Town of Wabeno
- Grand Plank Hotel ca. 1904 (4559 N Branch St); Town of Wabeno
- Crandon Ranger Station (401 N Lake); City of Crandon
- Crandon Creamery (Ye Olde Auction Barn, SW corner of Boulevard Ave & Glen St); City of Crandon
- Crandon Grade School (203 E Glen St); City of Crandon
- Methodist Episcopal Church (Lakeland Baptist, 106 Hazeldell Ave); City of Crandon
- Crandon State Bank (Halcyon Ch. 178 O E S, NW corner of S Lake Ave & E Jackson St); City of Crandon
- Forest County Courthouse (200 E Madison Ave); City of Crandon
- Crandon Theater (103 E Madison St); City of Crandon
- Page and Landeck Lumber (Bowles Foods, 101 E Madison St); City of Crandon
- Crandon Post Office (105 E Madison St); City of Crandon
- Soo Line Depot (Moved to Cracker Box); City of Crandon
- Crandon Nursing Home (105 W Pioneer Ave; City of Crandon); and
- A listing of 11 houses; City of Crandon
2. Archaeological Places

The Archaeological Site Inventory (ASI) is the most comprehensive list of the archaeological sites, mounds, marked and unmarked cemeteries, and cultural sites in the state. However, it includes only those sites that have been reported to the Wisconsin Historical Society and therefore does not include all possible sites and cemeteries of archeological significance in the state. This inventory has been developed over a period of 150 years, therefore, each entry in the database varies widely and the information has not been verified in all cases.

3. Community Design and Retaining Community Character

The shape and appearance of a community changes over time, as styles of buildings and development patterns react to changing economic conditions and technologies, and to changing tastes. Each community becomes an expression of the conditions that have prevailed throughout its history.

The design of a community must be primarily focused on serving the needs of residents today. In the process of adapting community design to changing needs care must be taken not to discard the remnants of the past that has made the community what it is today. At the same time a community is not a museum and must change with the times. Community design is a balancing act that balances the past and the future; the modern and the traditional; and, most importantly, the diverse needs and aspirations of the people who call that community home.
C. Goal, Objectives & Policies

Goal:

1. Preserve and enhance cultural, historic, and archeological resources.

Objectives:

1. Continue identification and protection of key cultural, historic and archeological sites.

2. Encourage nomination of sites to the State Historical Society.

Policy:

1. Work with citizens and local governments to protect cultural resources.

2. Identify cultural, historical, and archaeology resources within the County including study and identification of their historical significance Protect significant cultural, historical, and archaeology resources and utilize data on these resources to benefit the tourism industry.
Chapter 3: Housing
CHAPTER 3:
HOUSING

3.1 Background

3.2 Inventory and Trends

A. Existing Housing Stock
B. Value Characteristics
C. Occupancy Characteristics
D. Demand Characteristic
E. Government Housing Programs

3.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

Tables:

Table 1: Total Housing Units
Table 2: Housing Units, Year Built
Table 3: Housing Type, 2000
Table 4: Median Home Value of Owner Occupied Unit
Table 5: Monthly Housing Cost >30% of Income, 1999
Table 6: Rental Units and Vacancy Rate, 2000
Table 7: Median Gross Rent
Table 8: Median Gross Rent, Surrounding Counties
Table 9: Owner Occupancy
Table 10: Vacancy Rates
Table 11: Seasonal Housing Units
Table 12: Median Age
Table 13: Persons per Households
3.1 Background

This is the third of nine chapters that comprise the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. This housing chapter (element) is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit’s housing stock. The element shall also identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit’s existing housing stock.” The Comprehensive Planning Legislation also establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, one relates directly to this element. This goals is:

- Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community

Housing relates to the other eight chapters since the housing is a central need of an organized society. As a result, the information provided by this chapter will be referenced in other parts of the overall Plan.

The availability of good housing is a central concern of any comprehensive planning effort. Planning for the future of the county requires a comprehensive approach to assuring that the housing needs of all segments of the population are addressed. For low-income and special-needs populations, the disabled, homeless, and victims of domestic abuse, this can involve programs that make housing available at below market rates. But there is more to affordable housing than meeting the needs of particular segments of society. Moderately priced housing available to middle-income, working families is as important to the county as meeting the needs of the poor, elderly, or disabled. The availability of housing for workers can be an important factor in economic development.

A. Previous Planning Efforts

Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the State in
accessing formula program funds of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS. “The Consolidated Plan provides the framework for a planning process used by States and localities to identify housing, homelessness, community and economic development needs and resources and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs.” This is how the Department of Housing and Urban Development website [www.HUD.gov] describes the Consolidated Plan, which consists of a 5-year strategic plan, annual action plans, and annual performance reports, the Plan must be updated annually.

The Consolidated Plan has five parts: (1) an overview of the process; (2) a description of public participation; (3) a housing, homeless, community and economic development needs assessment; (4) long-term strategies to meet priority needs; and (5) an action plan. The Bureau of Housing prepares the Consolidated Housing Plan, and is focused on low-income and special needs populations.

The Consolidated Plan, in assessing housing needs, looks at a number of different factors that are significant components of the housing picture. Housing affordability is a primary consideration. According to federal guidelines a family should not have to spend more than thirty percent of its income on housing. Using this standard “an individual in Wisconsin would need to earn $12.22 per hour to afford the fair market rent unit at 30% of income. Households in the low-income range have great difficulty finding adequate housing within their means and that accommodates their needs.” This presents a particular problem for the working poor, many of whom earn little more than the federal minimum wage of $7.25 an hour.

Other factors than the construction of new housing units affect the quality and availability of housing as well. Just as the difficulty of providing affordable housing to low-income families can be stated in terms of an hourly wage, there is more involved in a well-housed community than the number of housing units.

“The connection between community housing, public facilities and economic development is important. Without adequate infrastructure, housing quantity and quality suffers. Without adequate infrastructure, economic development is limited. Without adequate housing, infrastructure and economic investment, a community’s downtown deteriorates and results in disinvestments, a dwindling labor force due to out migration, and declining tax base make it difficult for localities to thrive.”

The State Consolidated Housing Plan (CHP) is primarily focused on how government action can address special needs. “With limited staff and shrinking budgets, knowing how these numerous programs can work together more
efficiently and effectively would greatly benefit local governments and organizations”


The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) titled “A Framework for the Future”, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in December of 2003, is an update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP looks at housing in all ten counties that make up the North Central Region, including Forest. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address their housing issues.

Subsidized housing units are one focus of the RCP. Of the 5,389 such units in the Region, 211 are in Forest County. Sixty-two percent (132 units) of these are housing for the elderly, and just over thirty-four percent (72 units) are for families, with seven units designed for the disabled. This translates into one subsidized housing unit per 47.5 persons in Forest County, the lowest ratio for the ten county Region. This is similar to Juneau County where there is one unit per forty-nine persons.

The RCP looks at a number of programs available to help low-income residents with their housing needs. The USDA-RD’s Section 515 provides low-interest loans for low-income rental units in rural areas and cities with populations under 10,000. This was the financing mechanism for 46 percent of the subsidized units in the county. Section 8 is the largest federal housing program, which take two forms: project-based and tenant-based. There are 43 project-based Section 8 units in Forest County. The tenant-based Section 8, also known as housing vouchers is not tied to particular housing units but instead allows clients to arrange with any landlord who agrees to participate in the program, to rent an apartment at market rates. The tenant is required to pay a portion of the rent, usually conforming to thirty percent of gross income, and present a voucher for the remainder that is subsidized.

There are currently 72 housing units that take advantage Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). This is privately owned housing that receives a tax credit in exchange for pledging to offer rental units at affordable prices to low- and moderate-income families. In addition to directly subsidized housing units and indirect subsidies, such as tenant-based Section 8 or LIHTC meant to reduce the cost of rental housing to low-income residents, there are also a number of programs focused on rehabilitation and reducing the cost of homeownership.

The RCP addresses a number of housing issues including the location of subsidized housing units, homelessness, and Smart Growth. The issue of most
relevance to Forest County is affordability. Affordability is a primary consideration in housing policy, but as the RCP points out:

“Affordable housing in the context of Smart Growth can mean different things in different areas. An ‘adequate supply’ for ‘all income levels’ means that affordability is more than subsidized housing units for low-income families, the disabled, or elderly. It means that working families, single people, retirees, and the more well-to-do should all be able to find housing that meets their needs in a suitable location.”

A number of factors affect affordability, including the availability and cost of developable land, market demand, and the type and quality of housing. Using the federal standard of thirty percent of income, although affordability is not a serious problem in Forest County at this time, certain trends within the economy, especially the appreciation of lakefront property, could lead to it becoming a problem in the future.

B. Issues

- Affordable Housing
- Aging Housing Stock
- Growth in Seasonal Dwellings
- Elderly Housing Needs
- Subsidized and Special-needs Housing
- Waterfront Development
3.2 Inventory & Trends

Planning for housing considers if the housing needs of all Forest County residents are being met. Parts of the county have seen strong growth in the number of housing units constructed, with much of this growth in seasonal and recreational properties (Table 11). Much of the highest value housing property is concentrated around Crandon in the Towns of Lincoln and Nashville (Table 5). Forest County’s year 2000 median age is higher than the state median (Table 13).

Forest County has a high level of owner occupancy, ten percentage points higher than the state (Table 10). Homeownership levels are lowest in the City of Crandon (Table 9), because the amount of rental units is highest in the City (Table 7). About half of all housing units in the county are seasonal (Table 11). Every community saw an increase in seasonal dwellings in the 1990s (Table 11). Overall, 12.9 percent of Forest County homeowners reported spending 35 percent or more of their income on housing (Table 6).

A. Existing Housing Stock

1. Housing Units

The total number of housing units in Forest County (8,322) rose by 15.5 percent during 1990s, which is just higher than the state (12.9%) as a whole. But this increase was not spread evenly across the county.

Table 1 shows that over the period 1980 to 2000 the number of housing units doubled county-wide, with many towns experiencing higher growth around lakes. In the Towns of Alvin, Hiles, and Caswell, there was nearly a 300 percent increase in housing from 1980 to 2000. Over 500 housing units were constructed in Hiles, Lincoln, and Nashville. This housing increase is likely a reflection of seasonal and recreational unit construction.
### Table 1:
#### Total Housing Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>383.5%</td>
<td>326</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>290.0%</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>142.1%</td>
<td>260</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>265.5%</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>345.0%</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>306</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>294.5%</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>1,086</td>
<td>1,264</td>
<td>107.2%</td>
<td>654</td>
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<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>212.2%</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>129.5%</td>
<td>123</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
<td>393</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Forest County</strong></td>
<td>3,957</td>
<td>7,203</td>
<td>8,322</td>
<td>110.3%</td>
<td>4,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State</strong></td>
<td>1,752,969</td>
<td>2,055,774</td>
<td>2,321,144</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>568,175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
2. Building Age

Forest County has a housing stock that is slightly older than the state. For the state 43.7 percent of the housing was built before 1960, in Forest County 47.5 percent of housing is that old. Table 2 shows the number of housing units built during twenty-year periods.

And while only 27.5 percent of housing in the state reported in the 2000 Census was built in the previous twenty years, 35.3 percent of housing in Forest County was built after 1980. The City of Crandon is the only community with more housing built before 1940 than in the last 20 years. Wabeno has almost an equal amount of housing from before 1940 as built after 1980. All other towns have much more housing constructed after 1980 than exists from before 1940. Both Crandon and Wabeno have downtowns where most of their pre-1940 housing exists. Laona also has an original downtown, but sewered lake development next to their downtown has increased the number of houses constructed since 1980. Development around Lake Metonga is within the Town of Lincoln, so development in the Crandon area is similar to development in the Laona area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Civil Division</th>
<th>&lt;1940</th>
<th>1940-59</th>
<th>1960-79</th>
<th>1980-2000</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>220</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>188</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>142</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>146</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>148</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>577</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>285</td>
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<td>Forest County</td>
<td>1,524</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>2,245</td>
<td>2,945</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>543,164</td>
<td>470,862</td>
<td>667,537</td>
<td>639,581</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
3. Housing Type

The most significant fact about housing types in Forest County is the predominance of single-family housing 81.8 percent for the county as against 69.4 percent for the state as a whole. This is not unusual for a rural area. Also notable is the number of manufactured and mobile homes¹, which account for 12.7 percent of housing units, about triple the percentage for the state (4.4%). Table 3 shows the number and percentage of housing units of each type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Civil Division</th>
<th>Single Family</th>
<th>Duplex</th>
<th>3 to 19 Units</th>
<th>Over 20 Units</th>
<th>Mobile Homes</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Alvin, Town</td>
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<td>Argonne, Town</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Caswell, Town</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Crandon, Town</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>695</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
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<td>81</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Popple River, Town</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

Single-family residences are the largest class of housing type, ranging from almost 70 percent of total housing units in the City of Crandon to over 87 percent in Argonne. In the Towns of Blackwell, Popple River, and Ross, more than an 18 percent of all housing units are mobile homes. The Towns of Armstrong Creek, Freedom, Hiles, Nashville, and Wabeno have at least 10 percent of housing stock in mobile homes. Table 3 shows the number of housing units of each type.

¹ The Census lumps the two together under the definition of “a housing unit that was originally constructed to be towed on its own chassis.”
B. Value Characteristics

1. Median Home Value

The highest median values in Forest County are in the Towns of Lincoln and Nashville, which are both just under the state median. Five towns (Alvin, Blackwell, Caswell, Freedom, and Nashville) saw median values more than double during the 1990s, with values in the Town of Caswell increasing by 393.1 percent. Median home values in the City of Crandon, the Towns of Argonne, Lincoln, and Wabeno rose at lease as fast as the state median. Ross had the smallest increase in median value (also the lowest median value) as a percentage of value and in dollar terms. Table 5 shows the median value of owner-occupied housing and how it has changed. Census data for this table came from "the long form," now known as the American Community Survey (ACS), therefore the sample size was not large enough in Popple River in 1990 to produce any data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>$39,500</td>
<td>$72,000</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
<td>$32,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>$36,600</td>
<td>$84,400</td>
<td>130.6%</td>
<td>$47,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>$34,000</td>
<td>$66,700</td>
<td>96.2%</td>
<td>$32,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>$38,000</td>
<td>$61,500</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>$23,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>$21,500</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>109.3%</td>
<td>$23,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>$17,500</td>
<td>$86,300</td>
<td>393.1%</td>
<td>$68,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>$34,200</td>
<td>$59,200</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>$43,900</td>
<td>$91,100</td>
<td>107.5%</td>
<td>$47,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>$43,800</td>
<td>$87,000</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
<td>$43,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>$39,100</td>
<td>$67,200</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
<td>$28,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>$54,400</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>83.8%</td>
<td>$45,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>$45,900</td>
<td>$103,100</td>
<td>124.6%</td>
<td>$57,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town *</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$62,500</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$62,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>$29,800</td>
<td>$42,500</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>$12,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>$33,200</td>
<td>$63,800</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
<td>$30,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Forest County            | $38,700 | $77,400 | 100.0%              | $38,700                |
| State                    | $62,100 | $112,200| 80.7%               | $50,100                |

Source: U.S. Census

* No 1990 Census Data for Popple River

Although the median home value in Forest County is roughly 70 percent of the state median, it grew at a faster rate during the 1990s when a housing boom occurred mainly around water bodies in Forest County.
2. Monthly Owner Costs

There is a general consensus that a family should not have to spend more than 30 percent of its income on housing – this is the accepted definition of housing affordability. The highest median owner costs are in the City of Crandon, followed by the Towns of Lincoln, Nashville, Laona, and Wabeno, but those communities have the lowest percentage of owner occupied households living above their means. The highest median rent and utility costs are in the Towns of Blackwell and Crandon, topping $500 per month, but only the Town of Crandon has people living in unaffordable rental units. The City of Crandon has a median gross rent of $327, so affordable rent exists near the Town of Crandon, but with a 4.2% rental vacancy rate in the City an available rental unit may be difficult to find. Table 7 shows the rental unit vacancy rate.

Table 6 shows the percentage of homeowners and renters spending 30 percent or more of their income on housing. Most of the households in Table 6 are not living in affordable housing for their income level.

Overall, 12.9 percent of Forest County homeowners reported spending 35 percent or more of their income on housing, which is similar to state rate.

| Table 5:  
| Monthly Housing Cost  
| 30% Of Household Income Or Greater, 2000  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Civil Division</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Renter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| State                | 17.8% | 32.3% |

Source: U.S. Census

| Table 6:  
| Rental Units and Vacancy Rate, 2000  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Civil Division</th>
<th>Total Units</th>
<th>Vacancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| State                | 552,504     | 5.6%     |

Source: U.S. Census
3. Median Rent

Rents increased in Forest County much slower than in the state as a whole. Gross rent increased by $100 or more during the 1990s in four of the fifteen municipalities in Forest County. Three towns realized a decline in median rents, with Alvin having too low a Census count from the "long form," now known as the American Community Survey (ACS).

Overall the county affordable housing situation appears to be about average for a rural county. According to NLIHC 48 percent of renters must spend more than 35 percent of their income on a two-bedroom apartment. The average for non-metro counties in Wisconsin is 34 percent. For all non-metro counties nearly a quarter of households rent, in Forest County twenty-one percent of households rent. Table 8 shows median gross rents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>$280</td>
<td>$327</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>$47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>$225</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>-100.0%</td>
<td>-$225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>$270</td>
<td>$356</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>$86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>$229</td>
<td>$388</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>$159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>$405</td>
<td>$525</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>$120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>$325</td>
<td>$225</td>
<td>-30.8%</td>
<td>-$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>$272</td>
<td>$513</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
<td>$241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>$375</td>
<td>$325</td>
<td>-13.3%</td>
<td>-$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$242</td>
<td>-19.3%</td>
<td>-$58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>$269</td>
<td>$345</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>$76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>$295</td>
<td>$288</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
<td>-$7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>$248</td>
<td>$285</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>$37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>$225</td>
<td>$325</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$325</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>$265</td>
<td>$307</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>$42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>$272</td>
<td>$325</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>$53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>$399</td>
<td>$540</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>$141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
Rents in Forest County are at least $75 lower than rents in surrounding counties, and are growing at a much lower rate than neighboring counties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8: Median Gross Rent, Surrounding Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langlade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marinette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oconto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oneida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vilas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

C. Occupancy Characteristics

1. Owner Occupied

Homeownership is more than ten percent higher in Forest County than in the state as a whole. At over 79 percent in 2000 this rate has remained relatively stable going as far back as 1990, with about a 15-point lower rate of homeownership in the 1980s. This is fairly typical of rural areas, where there are few rental units.

The Towns of Hiles, and Popple River had the highest levels of owner occupancy at over 95 percent. Laona, Nashville, and Wabeno each had owner occupancy in the 73-77 percent range. Many remaining towns had a homeownership rate over 87 percent in 2000. The level of owner-occupancy is lowest in the City of Crandon. Homeownership levels in Crandon have remained fairly constant, and are lower than the state levels. Table 10 shows the percentage of owner occupied units and how it has changed.
Table 9: Owner Occupancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>67.1%</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>90.6%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
<td>92.8%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>81.1%</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
<td>87.4%</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>93.6%</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
<td>84.4%</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>67.1%</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>97.3%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>72.6%</td>
<td>95.4%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>74.7%</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>68.4%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

2. Vacant and Seasonally Vacant Housing

The vacancy rate of all housing units (houses and rentals) in Forest County (51.4%) is much higher than the rate for the entire state (10.2%). Visitors know Forest County as "Up North," so a large part of vacancy rates includes seasonally vacant units. Table 10 shows that in most communities where vacancy rates dropped, the amount of seasonally vacant unit component of the total vacancy rose. Table 11 displays the vacancy rates for 1990 and 2000, and the seasonal component of those vacancies.
### TABLE 10
**Housing Vacancy Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Civil Division</th>
<th>Vacant Units</th>
<th>Seasonal (Part of Vacant Units)</th>
<th>Vacant Units</th>
<th>Seasonal (Part of Vacant Units)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990</td>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50.3%</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>96.4%</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>93.7%</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85.1%</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93.5%</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>85.9%</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>63.7%</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>97.3%</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80.4%</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>78.7%</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
<td>594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>96.4%</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
<td>779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92.9%</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
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<td>76</td>
<td>71.1%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>92.1%</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
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<td>130</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>95.4%</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
<td>141</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
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<td>318</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>348</td>
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<td></td>
<td>88.1%</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
<td>3,913</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>4,279</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>91.4%</td>
<td>3,576</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>3,856</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>233,656</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>236,600</td>
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<td></td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td>150,601</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>142,313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

Table 11 shows that seasonal dwellings are a significant part of the housing stock in most of the towns. More than half of the vacant housing in the City of Crandon is seasonally vacant. Over 75 percent of vacant housing in all Forest County towns was seasonally vacant through the 1990s. Seasonal housing has increased in every community between 1990 and 2000. This includes lake homes, non-weatherized cabins, and hunting shacks.

Table 12 shows the total amount of seasonal units from 1980 to 2000. There has been overwhelming growth in seasonal dwellings in Forest County over the last twenty years. Of the towns that saw an increase in seasonal dwellings, the smallest increase was a doubling in the Town of Argonne. Overall seasonal dwellings in the county increased by 643 percent, because very few seasonal housing units existed in Forest County in 1980.
D. Demand Characteristics

1. Median Age of Population

Forest County is aging, but all the municipalities are not aging at the same rate. Three Forest County towns that added the most population in the 1990s (Lincoln, Nashville, and Wabeno) also have large Tribal populations. The Tribal populations are relatively young as shown with 20.6 (Potawatomi) & 26.0 (Mole Lake) median ages in 2000 (U.S. Census). School aged children from Lincoln and Nashville attend school in Crandon. About 31% of the Crandon School District’s student body, and about 21.8% of the Wabeno School District’s student body in 2006 is Native American (WDOA, State Tribal Relations Office, Nov. 2006). Laona has about the same median age as Lincoln and Nashville, but no part of their school enrollment comes from tribal members (White 88.5%; Asian/Pacific Islander 5.7%; Hispanic 4.2%; and Black 1.1%. Source WI DPI 2009 Enrollment [PESE]).

---

### Table 11: Seasonal Housing Units

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, City</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>143.9%</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin, Town</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>3177.8%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>108.3%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>228.6%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>17500.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>8766.7%</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>1952.0%</td>
<td>488</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>1775.0%</td>
<td>213</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>2633.3%</td>
<td>553</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>165.3%</td>
<td>453</td>
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<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>650.0%</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3425.0%</td>
<td>137</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>2366.7%</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>3,576</td>
<td>3,856</td>
<td>643.0%</td>
<td>3,337</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>107,586</td>
<td>150,601</td>
<td>142,313</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>34,727</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: U.S. Census
The USDA Job Corp has skewed the Blackwell average age at 20.9 years old in 2000, because 110 males and 23 females, between 18-24 years old are housed in the Job Corp dorms, and the whole town population in 2000 was 347. Table 13 shows how the median age has changed.

Since Forest County is adding residents from net migration, and since immigrants are almost always retirees, then that is why Forest County's average age of its residents is growing faster than the state. Forest County's average age was 43.2 years in 2000. By 2020 it is anticipated that the average age of county residents will be 46.3 years, and by 2030 it will be 49 years. This puts the county's average age substantially above the state mean of 36.4 years of age in 2000, and the gap widens with time as the state average age increases to 39.6 years in 2020, and 41.0 years in 2030. (WDWD, OEA, 2008)

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>36.2</td>
<td>37.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>55.3</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argonne, Town</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek, Town</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town *</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>12.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census

* Blackwell has 2 groups of institutionalized populations

Most municipalities in the county had a median age above the state level (36 years) in 2000. Argonne, Blackwell, and Wabeno all had median ages lower than the state in 2000. Alvin, Hiles, Popple River, and Ross all had a year 2000 median age over 50 years old.
2. Persons per Household

Household size declined in every municipality in the county during the 1990s. The rate of decline for the county was slightly higher than for the state. Declines of 10 percent or more occurred in Blackwell, Freedom, Hiles, Lincoln, Nashville, and Ross. Table 14 shows the average number of persons per household in each Forest County municipality.

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>-6.1%</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-9.5%</td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-3.9%</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Armstrong Creek,</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>-5.2%</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell, Town</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>-12.1%</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caswell, Town</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crandon, Town</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>-5.8%</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom, Town</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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<td>-10.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiles, Town</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-10.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laona, Town</td>
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<td>-6.6%</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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<td>Lincoln, Town</td>
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<td>-11.0%</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nashville, Town</td>
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<td>-11.1%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popple River, Town</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>-5.0%</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ross, Town</td>
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<td>-10.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wabeno, Town</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
<td>-5.3%</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>-6.3%</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>-4.2%</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census
E. Government Housing Programs

The Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is administered by Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority. Investors who allocate a number of units as affordable to low-income families for a certain period (usually 15 years) are allowed to take a credit on their income tax. There are 93 housing units that utilize the LIHTC in the county.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers are administered locally by NEWCAP, which is identified at the end of this section. Eligible families are issued vouchers that they can use to secure housing in the private market. Having found a suitable housing unit, which meets minimum health and safety standards and where the owner has agreed to rent under the program, the eligible family uses its voucher to cover the part of the rent beyond the portion it pays, usually 30 percent of its income. The landlord receives a subsidy directly for the portion of the Fair Market Rent not paid by the tenant. The voucher-holder signs a lease for a term of, at least, one year and the landlord signs a contract with the Housing Authority, running concurrently with the lease. Eligibility for the program is generally limited to families with incomes below 50% of the median for the county in which they reside. The program is open to any housing unit where the owner agrees to participate and where the unit satisfies the standards.

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD) is focused on rural areas, and thus may be the most promising source of housing-related funding. Below is a partial listing of programs available to localities:

- **Section 502 Homeownership Direct Loan** program of the Rural Housing Service (RHS) provides loans to help low-income households purchase and prepare sites or purchase, build, repair, renovate, or relocate homes.

- **Section 502 Mutual Self-Help Housing Loans** are designed to help very-low-income households construct their own homes. Targeted families include those who cannot buy affordable housing through conventional means. Participating families perform approximately 65 percent of the construction under qualified supervision.

- **Section 504 Very-Low-Income Housing Repair** program, provides loans and grants to low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes. Improvements must make the homes more safe and sanitary or remove health or safety hazards.

- **Section 515 Multi-Family Housing Loan** program supports the construction of multi-family housing for low-income residents. Under the program, which has been in operation in Wisconsin since 1969,
USDA underwrites fifty-year mortgages at a one percent interest rate in exchange for an agreement to provide housing for low and very low-income residents.

- **Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance** program provides an additional subsidy for households with incomes too low to pay RHS-subsidized rents.

- **Section 533 Rural Housing Preservation Grants** are designed to assist sponsoring organizations in the repair or rehabilitation of low-income or very-low-income housing. Assistance is available for landlords or members of a cooperative.

The above programs are all available through USDA-RD to those who meet the income requirements. There are also programs through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

- The HUD Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program finances land acquisition and site development associated with self-help housing for low-income families. Loans are made to the nonprofit sponsors of development projects and are interest-free. Portions of the loans are forgiven if promised units of housing are completed within a given period. These forgiven “grant conversion” funds may be used to subsidize future development projects.

- The HOME Investment Partnership Program aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. HOME funds may be used for rental assistance, assistance to homebuyers, new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of rental housing.

- The Small Cities Development Block Grant program is the rural component of HUD’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which is administered by state agencies. The state CDBG program provides assistance for the development of affordable housing and economic development efforts targeted to low- and moderate-income people.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), like HOME, aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. It provides an incentive for private entities to develop affordable housing. The credit reduces the federal taxes owed by an individual or corporation for an investment made in low-income rental housing. The amount of the tax deduction is tied to the proportion of low-income residents in the housing produced. The credit is paid out over 15 years to investors in the housing project. LIHTC provides funding for the construction of new buildings or the rehabilitation or conversion of
existing structures. To qualify, a property must set aside a certain share of its units for low-income households. Currently there are five buildings that receive the LIHTC: Harris St. Apts. (Laona), 607 Prospect Ave (Crandon), River St. (Wabeno), Grant Apts. (Crandon), and Metonga Apts. (Crandon).

North East Wisconsin Community Action Program (NEWCAP) is a non-profit organization headquartered in Oconto, but with a branch in Crandon. NEWCAP administers the Section 8 (housing voucher) program for the County, as well as WHEAP (energy assistance), and a weatherization program that performs roughly thirty energy-efficiency improvement projects for qualified homeowners every year in Forest County. NEWCAP also administers a homeownership and rehabilitation revolving loan program. Zero percent down-payment loans are available. The loans are repaid when the property is sold so the money can be loaned out again. Loans are also made for rehabilitation projects. NEWCAP has recently been accredited by HUD to provide foreclosure counseling, as well.

### 3.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

**Goals:**

1. Encourage an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community.

2. Discourage residential development in unsuitable areas.

3. Encourage adequate affordable housing for all individuals consistent with the rural character of the community.

4. Promote the maintenance and renovation of the existing housing stock as a source of affordable housing.

**Objectives:**

1. Multi-family dwellings and subdivision facilities should be located to coincide with major throughways.

2. Encourage local land use controls and permitting procedures that allow affordable housing opportunities.

3. Promote appropriate public & private sector development of senior and special needs housing within the County.
4. Prepare for the transition of many seasonal to year-round residences by fostering the level of service required by full-time residents.

Policies:

1. Restrict the location of new development in areas that are shown to be unsuitable for specific uses due to septic limitations, flood hazard, groundwater pollution, highway access problems, etc.

2. In the event that a manufactured home does not utilize a perimeter load-bearing foundation, any space between ground level and siding should be enclosed with permanent, non-load bearing concrete or masonry having a foundation-like appearance.

3. Foster services that will help elderly residents remain in their homes, to the extent possible.

4. Steer more intensive residential development such as two-family, multi-family and senior housing to the City of Crandon, the downtown Laona area that is served by the Laona Sanitary District, or the downtown Wabeno area served by the Wabeno Sanitary District where the utilities and services exist to accommodate the development.

5. Improve infrastructure for establishment of residential housing and multiple family housing units where appropriate.
Chapter 4: Transportation
CHAPTER 4:
TRANSPORTATION

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B. Issues

4.2 Inventory & Trends ...................................................................................................... Page 6
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B. Transit & Transportation Systems for Persons with Disabilities
C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
D. Rail
E. Airports
F. Water Transportation
G. Other Modes of Travel

4.3 Goal, Objectives & Policies ....................................................................................... Page 17

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Table 2: County Highway Improvement Program
Table 3: County Commuting Patterns

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Display 2: Typical County Road Cross-Section
Display 3: County Trunk Highway Standards
Display 4: Town Road Standards
Display 5: Bicycle Facilities Cross-Sections

Maps:
Map 4-1: Transportation System
4.1 Background

This chapter—the fourth of nine chapters of the Forest County Comprehensive Plan—is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(c) Wis. Stats.] for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation.

This chapter compares the County’s objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The chapter also identifies highways within the County by function and incorporates state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in Forest County.

The Comprehensive Planning legislation also establishes 14 state comprehensive planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to transportation planning:

1) Encouraging neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.

2) Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

Three of the state goals refer to the provision of public infrastructure, of which transportation facilities are a major component. These three goals are:

- Promoting the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.

- Encouraging land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.

- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Of course, the state planning goals are sufficiently broad enough that one could arguably make the case that the other remaining goals also have some
relationship to transportation. For example, the goal of preserving cultural, historic, and archaeological sites has the obvious connection to transportation in that planned transportation facilities should be programmed to avoid negative impacts on such sites. Similarly, transportation networks typically extend beyond individual community boundaries, necessitating coordination and cooperation among adjacent units of government, another of the state's 14 planning goals.

A. Previous Studies

1. FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is the current federal level transportation policy and spending program due for reauthorization at the time of this writing. Other federal legislation that frames transportation planning includes the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA); the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and the Clean Air Act. Environmental Justice is an applicable executive order that attempts to ensure that transportation planning and programming includes underrepresented groups such as minority and low-income populations.

2. STATE TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Corridors 2020

Corridors 2020 was designed to enhance economic development and meet Wisconsin’s mobility needs well into the future. The 3,200-mile state highway network is comprised of two main elements: a multilane backbone system and a two-lane connector system. All communities over 5,000 in population are to be connected to the backbone system via the connector network. Within Forest County, U.S. Highway (USH) 8 is designated as part of the Corridors 2020 system. USH 8 is a connector route that runs east and west through Crandon.

This focus on highways was altered in 1991 with the passage of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which mandated that states take a multi-modal approach to transportation planning. Now, bicycle, transit, rail, air, and other modes of travel would make up the multi-modal plan. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s (WisDOT) response to ISTEA was the two-year planning process that created TransLinks 21 in 1994.

TransLinks 21

WisDOT incorporated Corridors 2020 into TransLinks 21, and discussed the impacts of transportation policy decisions on land use. TransLinks 21 is a 25-
year statewide multi-modal transportation plan that WisDOT completed in 1994. Within this needs-based plan are the following modal plans:

- Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020
- Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020
- Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report

Connections 2030

Connections 2030 is Wisconsin’s latest long-range, statewide multi-modal transportation plan. This recently adopted plan is policy based and incorporates the previous Corridors 2020 and Translinks 21 plans. Like Corridors 2020, Connections 2030 identifies a series of system-level priority corridors that are critical to Wisconsin’s travel patterns and the state’s economy. Within Forest County, U.S. Highway (USH) 8 is designated as part of the North Country (Minnesota to Michigan) Corridor.


3. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Regional Comprehensive Plan

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) titled “A Framework for the Future”, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in December of 2003, is an update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP looks at transportation in all ten counties of the North Central Wisconsin Region. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address transportation issues.

One trend identified in the RCP is the increase in drivers age 65 and over. Wisconsin’s older population age 65 and over, is expected to constitute about 20% of the state’s population in 2020. In Forest County, the percentage already exceeded 19 percent by the year 2000. The aging of the baby boom generation will mean an increasing number of elderly drivers. This is the first generation to have been highly mobile throughout adulthood, and its members may continue to travel more as long as they are physically able to do so. Aging takes a toll on the physical and cognitive skills needed for driving. Older drivers are more likely to misjudge oncoming traffic speeds and distances or fail to see other drivers near them. The special needs of this population group will have to be addressed.
The RCP recommends a variety of strategies that might aid in dealing with these and other identified issues. Two such strategies include corridor planning and rural intelligent transportation systems. Corridor planning is one way to relieve some of the need for additional direct capacity expansion by comprehensively managing critical traffic corridors. Rural ITS applications have the potential to make major improvements in safety, mobility, and tourist information services. For more information on the Regional Comprehensive Plan go online at: http://www.ncwrpc.org.

Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan

In 2004, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission created this Plan to guide the development of an interconnected bikeway system for the North Central Wisconsin Region. Potential routes and trails are identified and an improvement description was created for each county that trails existed to facilitate how the plan can become reality in a cost efficient manner.

Locally Developed, Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan

This plan was prepared as a joint planning effort between Forest, Oneida and Vilas counties. These counties have been slowly working together to coordinate and expand transportation services for elderly, disabled or low income residents. SAFETEA-LU requires the preparation of coordination plans for entities that will access certain FTA (Federal Transit Authority) funds. SAFETEA-LU states that projects funded must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. The stated goal is to maximize the three programs' coverage by minimizing the duplication of similar, overlapping services. SAFETEA-LU also stipulates that the plan be developed through a process that includes representation of public, private and non-profit transportation and human services providers, and participation by the public.

B. Issues

Part of the planning process is the identification of issues. These are the things that need to be addressed in the plan.

- Roadway Use Conflicts / Capacity

Although an important component of the County’s economy, tourism can have consequences on the transportation system. Recreational vehicles and vehicles pulling various trailers (campers, boats, ATV carriers, etc.) often compete with regular daily traffic for use of many public highways in the County, particularly
in areas of access to recreational sites and facilities. This has become a significant concern within the County such that the County Traffic Safety Commission has called for WisDOT to consider safety improvements such as intersection improvements and passing lanes particularly on USH 8.

A related roadway conflict issue is recreational vehicle (i.e. ATV, snowmobile, etc.) crossings of public roadways.

- Transportation Costs

There is some concern regarding transportation costs taking a larger share of disposable income. With gas prices exceeding $3 per gallon, it is easy to see a correlation. The average purchase price of new vehicles seems to have grown significantly, and inflation certainly is a factor. However, vehicle registration fees and taxes in Wisconsin are the lowest in the Midwest, and ongoing dealer incentives and low financing rates make purchasing a new vehicle more attractive. Wisconsin ranks 42nd in the nation with respect to average auto insurance expenditures.

One way to address the issue of transportation affordability is the development of public transit and other alternative means of travel. This is of particular importance for people with restricted resources such as the disabled, seniors, youth or low-income individuals.

- Safety Improvement – US Highway 8

A top transportation concern is often the need to upgrade or improve the safety of the current road system. The Forest County Traffic Safety Commission has made recommendations to address several traffic safety concerns through the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. These recommendations include the following:

That the Intergovernmental Relations Committee shall go on record in support of adding to the County’s comprehensive plan a section that would request of the State of Wisconsin, Department of Transportation, that a review be done and that a timeline be set to alleviate the line of site problems that currently exist at the intersection of County Highway “S” and U.S. Highway 8. This study to include the possible removal of guardrails on the north side of U.S. Highway 8 and/or any other feasible changes to minimize the current site problem.

That the Intergovernmental relations Committee shall go on record in support of adding to the County’s comprehensive plan a section that would request of the State of Wisconsin, Department of Transportation, that a review be done and timeline be set on constructing passing lanes on U.S. Highway 8 between
Crandon and Laona. Passing lanes to commence at the intersection of County Highway “W” and proceed to the east in an attempt to alleviate traffic congestion that currently occurs through the Potawatomi Community area, and that consideration be given to constructing additional passing lanes, as needed, to alleviate traffic congestion to and from the Laona area.

- Road Maintenance / Brushing / Plowing

Regular road maintenance including roadside brushing and mowing and winter road maintenance is a common issue. Some local units do their own maintenance while others contract for services. Lack of adequate funding for maintenance is a major concern.

- Weight Restrictions

With logging activities throughout the County, there are issues/concerns regarding weight limits on roads and the potential for damage. The recent change by the State allowing an extra axle and increasing allowable weight by 10,000 pounds to 90,000 has raised concern. In Forest County, a particular issue is the trend of trucking / delivery companies going to heavier trucks that exceed weight limits and result in not being able to go all the way out to many local businesses and forcing them to make arrangements for pick-up.

### 4.2 Inventory & Trends

The transportation system in Forest County is comprised of a roadway network used by automobiles, trucks, taxies, buses, bicycles, and pedestrians where no sidewalks exist, a public airport, and several private landing areas. In this section the transportation system is described along with trends in usage and development. Specialized transit is also discussed.

#### A. Roadways

Forest County's roadway network is comprised of over 1,038 (2009 inventory) miles of highways and streets connecting communities and their citizens to businesses and recreational activities throughout the County, as well as to major urban centers in relatively close proximity.

1. Classifications

These roads are classified in two ways: 1) by jurisdiction and 2) by function. The jurisdictional classification indicates who owns or is responsible for the roadway. The functional classification identifies the role or function the roadway plays in moving traffic.
In addition to these main classifications, a road or segment of road may hold a variety of other designations including county forest road, rustic road, emergency route, or truck route. For example, there is one designated Rustic Road within Forest County. Rustic Road 34 is located in the Town of Alvin and is actually comprised of two town roads: Fishel Road and Carey Dam Road. Truck routes are discussed at the end of this chapter under Trucking.

**Jurisdiction**

Within a jurisdictional framework, the roads within Forest County fall into three major classifications: state (state trunk highways – "STH" and United States highways - "USH"), county (county trunk highways - "CTH") and city or town streets/roads (local roads). The Transportation System Map illustrates the jurisdictional classification of roadways within Forest County. Towns maintain jurisdiction over the greatest mileage of the County’s road system with over 72 percent of the total mileage. County trunk highways make up about 11 percent of the system for 109.06 miles. Table 1 gives the mileage breakdown for the jurisdictional classification of roads within Forest County.

There is one U.S. highway in the County—USH 8. The County contains portions of six state trunk highways: 32, 52, 55, 70, 101, and 139.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Functional Classification</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arterial</td>
<td>Collector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. and State*</td>
<td>89.70</td>
<td>62.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>91.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Towns</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>131.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>89.70</td>
<td>288.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WisDOT & NCWRPC. *US Highways are under the jurisdiction of the State of Wisconsin DOT.

**Functional Classification**

A functional classification system groups streets and highways into classes according to the character of service they provide. This character of service ranges from providing a high degree of travel mobility to providing land access functions.

The current functional classification system used in Wisconsin consists of five classifications that are divided into urban and rural categories. Functional classifications are used to determine eligibility for federal aid. For purposes of functional classification, federal regulations define urban as places of 5,000 or more in population, so the rural classifications apply throughout Forest County. Display 1 summarizes the rural functional classification system.
The Transportation System Map illustrates the functional classification of roadways within Forest County. The County has one principal arterial (USH 8); four minor arterials (STHs 32 and 55 south of Highway 8, 70 and 139); and various major and minor collectors.

Table 1 also breaks down the mileage for the functional classification of roads within Forest County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Display 1</th>
<th>Rural Highway Functional Classification System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Arterials</td>
<td>Serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes generally serve all urban areas greater than 5,000 population. The rural principal arterials are further subdivided into 1) Interstate highways and 2) other principal arterials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Arterials</td>
<td>In conjunction with the principal arterials, they serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-area traffic movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Collectors</td>
<td>Provide service to moderate sized communities and other inter-area traffic generators and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher function routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Collectors</td>
<td>Collect traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining smaller communities, locally important traffic generators, and higher function roads. All developed areas should be within a reasonable distance of a collector road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Roads</td>
<td>Provide access to adjacent land and provide for travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WisDOT

2. Road Design Standards

Roads should be designed for the function they serve. Lightly traveled rural town roads may remain graveled to reduce speed levels and maintain a rural "country" character in the landscape. Where higher traffic volumes are expected, roads should be paved. Communities should consider the current and potential future usage of a road to determine if minimum design standards will be adequate or if more is needed. An understanding of road design can be taken from a typical cross-section of a county highway found in Wisconsin, as shown in Display 2.
WisDOT administrative code establishes minimum standards for construction or improvement of county and town roads. For rural county highways, the code provides for use of *alternative to the minimum standards* known as "3R" or Design Criteria for Resurfacing, Restoration, and Rehabilitation Projects. Forest County typically uses these alternative standards. For county trunk highways, design standards are set by rural functional classifications as shown in Displays 3A, 3B, & 3C. For town roads, minimum standards by improvement level i.e. reconstruction or resurfacing and reconditioning, are shown in Displays 4A & 4B.

### Display 3A

**County Highway Standards "3R" - Arterials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Class</th>
<th>Design ADT</th>
<th>Design Speed MPH</th>
<th>Traveled Way</th>
<th>Shoulder</th>
<th>Roadway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3RA1</td>
<td>Under 750</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3RA2</td>
<td>750-2000</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3RA3</td>
<td>Over 2000</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WisDOT
Display 3B
County Highway Standards "3R" - Collectors & Locals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Class</th>
<th>Design ADT</th>
<th>Design Speed MPH</th>
<th>Traveled Way</th>
<th>Shoulder</th>
<th>Roadway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3RC1</td>
<td>Under 750</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3RC2</td>
<td>750-2000</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3RC3</td>
<td>Over 2000</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WisDOT

Display 3C
County Highway Standards "3R" - Bridges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design ADT</th>
<th>Usable Bridge Width IN Feet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-750</td>
<td>Traveled way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>751-2000</td>
<td>Traveled way plus 2 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-4000</td>
<td>Traveled way plus 4 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 4000</td>
<td>Traveled way plus 6 feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WisDOT

Construction of new or complete reconstruction of existing town roads are required to meet a higher level of design standards than less substantial resurfacing or reconditioning improvements. Examples of resurfacing and reconditioning improvements which may be appropriate for existing town roads include pavement rehabilitation; widening of lanes and shoulders; replacing bridge elements to correct structural deficiencies; bridge deck overlays, bridge and culvert replacement; and other related improvements such as minor grading, sub-grade work and correction of drainage problems.

Display 4A
Town Road Standards - Reconstruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Class</th>
<th>Current ADT</th>
<th>Design Speed MPH</th>
<th>Traveled Way</th>
<th>Shoulder</th>
<th>Roadway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Under 250</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>250-750</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Over 750</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WisDOT
3. Surface Conditions

Forest County and many of the local units within the County utilize the PASER system developed by the University of Wisconsin Transportation Information Center for measuring the condition of their roadways. PASER stands for Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating System. Although there are different scales for concrete, asphalt, sealcoated, gravel and unimproved roads, they are generally based on a scale ranging between "1" (very poor condition) to "10" (excellent condition).

WisDOT now requires all local units of government to submit road condition rating data every two years as part of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). PASER and WISLR are tools that local governments can use to manage pavements for improved decision making in budgeting and maintenance. The Forest County Highway Department uses this information in the development of its long-range highway improvement program, which is shown in Table 2.

4. Proposed Highway Improvements

The WisDOT prepares a six-year improvement program that identifies improvement projects for state trunk highways and federal highways within Forest County. The County Highway Department prepares its own roadway management plan identifying needed improvements on county highways. It is important to remember that continually changing needs, funding availability, and political climate affect the ultimate implementation of these improvement plans on a year-to-year basis.
Proposed improvements on the County highway system are shown in Table 2. The most recent state six-year improvement program for the 2008-2013 period identifies only one project at this time. A bridge on STH 55 in Alvin is scheduled for rehabilitation in 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Highway</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Mileage</th>
<th>Type of Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>CTH M</td>
<td>Max Rd.</td>
<td>Johnson Rd.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>CTH G</td>
<td>RRX</td>
<td>U.S. Hwy 8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>CTH P</td>
<td>Wagner Rd.</td>
<td>Hageman Ln.</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>CTH S</td>
<td>Range Line Rd.</td>
<td>Chaney Rd.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>CTH O</td>
<td>CTH G</td>
<td>STH 139</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Minor Reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>CTH T</td>
<td>CTH H</td>
<td>STH 32</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>CTH Q</td>
<td>CTH W</td>
<td>CTH DD</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>CTH G</td>
<td>STH 55</td>
<td>USH 8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>CTH S</td>
<td>USH 8</td>
<td>STH 55</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>CTH DD</td>
<td>CTH Q</td>
<td>STH 52</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>CTH G</td>
<td>STH 55</td>
<td>USH 8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>CTH M</td>
<td>STH 55</td>
<td>Schallock Rd.</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>CTH C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.43</td>
<td>Reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>CTH W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>CTH Q</td>
<td>CTH W</td>
<td>CTH DD</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>CTH P</td>
<td>STH 55</td>
<td>Peshtigo R. Rd.</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>CTH O</td>
<td>CTH G</td>
<td>STH 139</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Minor Reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>CTH C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.43</td>
<td>Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>CTH DD</td>
<td>CTH Q</td>
<td>Langlade Co. Line</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>CTH B</td>
<td>STH 55</td>
<td>Oneida Co. Line</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>CTH Q</td>
<td>CTH W</td>
<td>CTH DD</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Grind and Resurface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>CTH W</td>
<td>USH 8</td>
<td>STH 52</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Resurface</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Forest County Highway Department

5. **Trucking**

There are two types of WisDOT designated truck routes within Forest County—1) Designated Long, and 2) 65 foot Restricted. The Designated Long Truck Routes are USH 8, STH 32 south of Highway 8, STH 70 and STH 139. The 65' Restricted Truck Routes are STH 32 north of Highway 8, STH 52 and STH 55.

These routes provide Forest County with access to the rest of the state and the nation. Local truck routes often branch out from these major corridors to link local industry with the main truck routes as well as for the distribution of commodities within the local area. Mapping these local routes is beyond the scope of this study, and local issues such as safety, weight restriction, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

County Trunk Highways (CTH) connect the County’s rural areas with the designated state truck routes. County trunk highways serve an important role
in linking the County's ag and forestry resources to the Region's major highways and economic centers. All county roads are generally open to trucks. The County uses seasonal weight limits in an effort to minimize damage.

6. Traffic

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts for selected locations in Forest County are show on the Transportation Map. The counts come from WisDOT's regular traffic counting program selected to give a general feeling for the traffic levels through out the County. The selected counts do not necessarily reflect the peak traffic location of a given road.

Average Annual Daily Traffic counts are calculated by multiplying raw hourly traffic counts by seasonal, day-of-week, and axle adjustment factors. The daily hourly values are then averaged by hour of the day and the values are summed to create the AADT count. Traffic in Forest County ranges from a few cars a day on remote town roads to more than 7,000 on USH 8 in Crandon.

7. Commuting Patterns

County-to-County Worker Flow data compiled by the US Census is a convenient way to analyze commuting patterns, see Table 3. Forest County is a net exporter of workers. Nearly 983 workers leave the County for work on a regular basis, while about 784 enter the County for work. This creates a net loss of about 199 workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Forest County Commuting Patterns, 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living in listed county - working in Forest County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oneida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marinette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langlade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oconto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vilas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outagamie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census and NCWRPC
The primary beneficiary of this exchange is Oneida County which gains 343 workers. Although Forest is basically a net exporter of labor to surrounding counties, it does have a positive exchange with Oconto and Langlade where it gains 142 and 97 workers, respectively.

8. Park and Ride

With increasing cost of vehicle use, people are attempting to reduce those expenses by sharing rides, particularly for employment related commuting. Park and ride lots are one tool being promoted by WisDOT. The nearest designated park and ride facility is located at USH 51 and CTH S south of Tomahawk in Lincoln County. There are also lots in Shawano and Oconto Counties. Unofficial park and ride sites exist within Forest County such as at the Mays establishment near Crandon, and on several private sites along USH 8 in Armstrong Creek.

B. Transit & Transportation Systems For Persons With Disabilities

The Forest County Commission on Aging provides demand-response specialized transportation for the elderly and disabled across Forest County with paid and volunteer drivers. Forest County also works with adjacent counties to provide service in the most cost-effective manner. Headwaters Inc. provides transportation for residents of Forest County that work at their Rhinelander workshop facility. The Mole Lake and Potawatomi reservations provide transit services to their residents and also work with Forest County to open service to non-tribal members. For example, the Mole Lake provides weekly service to Crandon and Rhinelander.

Forest County works with Headwaters Inc, the Tribes and Oneida and Vilas counties on coordination and expansion of transportation services. In 2008, the group completed a coordination plan that recommended a tri-county mobility manager position and development of projects that fit available funding programs such as the Mole Lake-Crandon-Rhinelander route to evaluate the potential for a tri-county transit system.

There is no scheduled long distance intercity bus service available in Forest County. Private charter bus companies can be contracted for service.

C. Bicycle And Pedestrian Facilities

All roads except freeways are available for bicycle and pedestrian travel. Forest County and its local units have slowly expanded designated bike routes on highways and off-road trails over time. Sidewalks exist in Crandon, Laona, Mole Lake, and Wabeno.
The Nicolet State trail enters Forest County from the south. There are a number of closed circuit biking trails within the National Forest, and scenic forest roads may make interesting bike routes. In fact, the well-attended, annual Nicolet Wheel-A-Way event brings a significant number of bikers from Three Lakes in Oneida County onto various forest roads in Forest County.

CTH W has 15 foot lanes with 3 foot paved shoulders from Perry to Keith Siding Road which could be used by bikes. This highway runs past Lake Lucerne and is scenic. There have been complaints about biking conditions on STH 32 between Wabeno and Laona.

Forest County is currently developing the abandoned rail line between Crandon and White Lake as a multi-use trail in cooperation with the WDNR and Langlade County. The trail will be known as the Wolf River Trail.

Basic types of bicycle facilities include shared roadways, improved shoulders (bike lanes), and off-road shared use paths. See Display 5.

On a shared roadway, bicyclists and motorists are accommodated in the same travel lane, where motorists may sometimes find it necessary to overtake bicyclists by switching into the oncoming travel lane. The majority of cycling in rural areas currently occurs on paved roadways with no special accommodations for bikes.

On lower speed roadways, bicycle lane widths of 4 feet may suffice. But where motor vehicle speeds exceed 35mph, or where there are high motor vehicle volumes, a minimum width of 5 feet is recommended.

Shoulder rumble strips provide an unsafe surface for bicycling and should not be used where bicyclists are allowed, unless additional paved width is provided for bicycle use.
Electric personal assistive mobility devices such as wheel chairs, scooters and Segways can utilize many of the same trails and roadways as cyclists and pedestrians.

D. Rail

Canadian National track traverses Forest County through Cavour, Laona Junction and Argonne, however, there is no local access to rail service in Forest County. Both the main line and a rail spur in Argonne that linked to the Crandon industrial park have been taken out of service indefinitely. Shipments needing rail service would have to be trucked to nearby cities with rail access such as Rhinelander, Tomahawk or Wausau. See Map 5-2.

E. Airports

The Crandon Municipal Airport, which lies 3 miles southwest of the city, is Small General Aviation class (formerly basic utility, BU-A) airport. Small General Aviation airports primarily support single engine aircraft, but may also accommodate small twin-engine aircraft and occasionally business aircraft activity.

Total aviation operations (take-offs and landings) are projected to remain stable around 84 per week. The airport has approximately 5 based aircraft and includes a 3,100 foot asphalt runway, apron, connecting taxiway and hangar area. Recent Airport Improvement Program grants will redo the taxi way, extend the runway and enhance lighting at the airport.

The airport facilities offer an opportunity to act as a base for warehousing and distribution of goods and services.

The closest scheduled air passenger service available to Forest County residents is at the Rhinelander - Oneida County Airport in Rhinelander, and the Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) near Wausau.

There is one private landing strip within the county, located in the Town of Laona.

F. Water Transportation

There are no harbors or ports within Forest County, so there is no significant water transport of passengers or freight. Today, tubing, boating and sailing are popular forms of recreational transportation in and around Forest County. Forest has more than 700 miles of navigable streams and rivers.
G. Other Modes of Travel

There is significant use of a variety of miscellaneous other vehicles within Forest County including snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), horses, cross-country skis, and others. For the most part, however, these forms of travel are not recognized as modes of transportation, but rather as forms of recreation. As such, these alternative forms of travel will not be addressed extensively in the transportation element. However, it is important to be aware of interactions between recreational forms of travel and more traditional transportation systems. For example, snowmobiles have an extensive network of their own trail routes that often parallel or cross public highways. A snowmobile trail may compete against a bike trail for the same right-of-way. Although snowmobile and bicycle trails can easily coexist, fundamental differences often keep the interests at odds.

4.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goal:

1. To provide an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens, while maintaining the rural character of the County.

Objectives:

1. Maintain the efficiency, safety and functionality of the County's existing transportation system, which links the urban center with outlying towns, adjacent communities and the region.

2. Encourage a balanced transportation network that provides a choice in the type of mode (i.e. car, bus, bike, walking, etc.) easy transfer between modes and transportation opportunities for those without use of an automobile.

3. Achieve close coordination between development of transportation facilities and land use planning, land development and rural character preservation.

4. Preserve and enhance the existing rail lines in the County.

5. Minimize the negative impacts of proposed transportation facility expansions.
Policies:

1. Work with the Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRCP) to ensure that the County's transportation system is coordinated with surrounding regional systems and that the County's interests are well served when major transportation facilities or programs are proposed.

2. Work with WisDOT on corridor preservation for all federal and state highways.

3. Encourage WisDOT to alleviate line of site problems that currently exist at the intersection of USH 8 and CTH S.

4. Encourage WisDOT to review USH 8 between Crandon and Laona and set timelines on constructing passing lanes as necessary to alleviate traffic congestion through the Potawatomi Community area as well as to and from the Laona area.

5. Preserve scenic views by limiting off-premise advertising along selected highways.

6. Plan for extension of County highways and other major arterials as necessary to complete connections, provide for appropriate routes for trucks and emergency vehicles and serve planned development areas.

7. Consider future road locations, extensions, or connections when reviewing development plans and proposals.

8. Work with local governmental units to plan for a network of interconnected roads in planned development areas to control highway access, preserve rural character, and improve access to these areas.

9. Space roadway access according to minimum standards to increase safety and preserve capacity.

10. Plan for new developments to minimize extensive road construction and avoid burden to towns for maintenance. Consider assisting towns with implementing road impact fees for new development projects that place a burden on or require upgrading of town roads.

11. Work with the towns to update and implement Town Roadway Management Plans to provide for the appropriate maintenance of town roads.
12. Encourage traditional neighborhood designs (TND) to support a range of transportation choices.

13. Support coordination and consolidation of specialized transit by the community coalition of agencies that serve the County's elderly and handicapped residents.

14. Explore the creation of a Railroad Commission to promote the use of rail.
Chapter 5: Utilities & Community Facilities
CHAPTER 5:
UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

5.1 Background

5.2 Inventory and Trends

A. Water-related Facilities
B. Solid Waste & Recycling Related Facilities
C. Public Works
D. Public Safety
E. Health Care
F. Education, Recreation & Culture
G. Energy & Telecommunications
H. Community Facility Programs

5.3 Goals, Objectives & Recommendations

Maps:

Map 5-1: Utilities & Community Facilities
Map 5-2: Public Lands
Map 5-3: Ambulance & Fire Service
Map 5-4: Schools & District Boundaries
5.1 Background

This is the fifth of nine chapters that comprise the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. This chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local government unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other government facilities.” The future of development in Forest County depends upon plans and policies of the communities within the county. These plans and policies are defined by the expressed desires of the community. Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Legislation establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to this chapter. These goals are:

1) Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential commercial and industrial structures.

2) Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Although these components are separated, they are all interrelated. For example, the pattern of land use affects the delivery of public services, as does the shape of the transportation network. The condition of groundwater as a natural resource also determines the quality of the County’s most basic utility: the water that residents drink. The economic development strategies adopted by the County affect how land is used and the kind of community facilities that local governments can provide. As a result of this connectivity, the information provided by this chapter is referenced in other parts of the plan where connections exist. This chapter will focus on describing these public services and facilities in detail and identify the goals and policies intended to protect and utilize these resources in a responsible and efficient manner.

A. Previous Studies

1. Waters of Wisconsin: The Future of Our Aquatic Ecosystems and Resources

This report is the product of a yearlong effort involving State agencies and private groups to emphasize the importance of water in the state. It looks at a broad range of issues involving water quality including storm water runoff,
land-use, and transportation. One of the major findings in the report is the need for policy adjustment regarding the protection of groundwater and surface water.

“The ‘buried treasure’ of groundwater is simply indispensable to life on the ‘surface’ of Wisconsin. Groundwater connects to and feeds our wetlands, streams, and lakes; supplies water to 750,000 private wells and 97% of Wisconsin’s municipalities; supports farming across the state, including more than 340,000 acres of irrigated land; and contributes in countless ways to Wisconsin’s commercial, industrial, and recreational economy.”

The residents of Forest County have a heavy reliance on groundwater for drinking water and agricultural uses. This high demand makes it especially important to implement policies that will ensure the quality and quantity of water resources.


The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) entitled “A Framework for the Future” was adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in December of 2003. It is an update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP discusses utility and community facility issues throughout the ten-county North Central Region. The RCP focuses on a range of trends in public facilities and makes general recommendations on how local governments throughout the ten-county region should deal with them.

3. Forest County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan

This document was produced in response to the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, which requires local governments to adopt such a plan to be eligible for certain disaster mitigation programs. The report looks at general conditions in Forest County, including population, transportation, land use and economics. A detailed description of the county’s wetlands, floodplains and water bodies sets the stage for subsequent discussions of flooding events. An inventory of utilities, community facilities, and emergency services form the background for understanding how the County might respond to a disaster.

Risk assessment is reason for the All-Hazards Mitigation program. In order to mitigate the risks, it’s necessary to assess their relative importance. The report reviews mostly natural disasters and how they have affected the county in the past. Examples of hazards include floods, tornadoes, winter storms, drought, and fire. Hazardous materials accidents are included too. The likelihood of any given hazard occurring is evaluated based upon historical data and the impact of these hazards. The plan recommends how County government should
respond to such occurrences and suggests mitigation measures to reduce the risk caused by identified hazards.

Forest County created an *Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)* to coordinate the County and local units of government during times of response and recovery. The EOP provides a general guide for county and municipal emergency response personnel when responding to disasters and links the County and municipal emergency operations plans.

4. **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.

5. **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.

**Segment 2—Forest Co. to Michigan, Nicolet State Trail (Northern Region)**
The DNR has acquired the Nicolet State Trail corridor from Gillett north to the Michigan state border. In Forest County, this former rail corridor runs through the communities of Carter, Wabeno, Laona, Cavour, and Newald. In 2009, tracks were removed and gravel was added to the trail corridor in Laona, so a trail now exists from Laona south to Gillett.

**Segment 13—Dresser to Michigan**
This statewide 250-mile-long east-west corridor consists of rail line, and an optional highway right-of-way. In Forest County, this rail corridor runs through Argonne, Cavour, and Armstrong Creek between the communities of Rhinelander and Goodman. In late 2009 this rail corridor was "red lined." Segment 56, and Segment 2 both intersect with this rail corridor.

**Segment 56—Argonne to Shawano (Wolf River State Trail)**
This rail corridor is abandoned from USH 8 in Crandon south to White Lake in Langlade County. The Crandon to Argonne segment of this rail corridor was "red lined" in late 2009 because no uses exist in Crandon any longer.
Tracks no longer cross USH 8, and the trail is developing south of USH 8 toward White Lake.

**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.

A copy is available from the WDNR Wisconsin State Parks online at: http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/ORG/LAND/parks/reports/trails/#contents.

6. **North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan, 2004**

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, created by each county that trails existed in, to facilitate how the plan can become reality cost effectively.

Forest County trails within this regional plan come from the 1999 Citizen Bike Route Initiative Plan. Two abandoned rail corridors listed in this plan are becoming trails today: the Nicolet State Trail, and the Wolf River State Trail.

7. **Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2007-2011**

The primary purpose of this recreation plan is to provide continued direction in meeting the current and future recreation needs of the County. This direction takes the form of an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities followed by establishing recommendations to meet identified needs. Adoption of this plan and its subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) allows for continued eligibility for financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), the Stewardship Fund, and many other federal and state funding programs. The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission prepared the plan for the Forest County Forestry Department.

Recommendations in the back of the plan show a desire to complete the Nicolet State Trail, the Wolf River State Trail, to upgrade Veterans Memorial Park, and a list of projects organized by municipality.
8. **Status of Investments in Advanced Telecommunication Infrastructure in Wisconsin, 2006**

This is the sixth biennial report to the Legislature as required under Wis. Stat. §196.196(5)(f). The report contains updated information and reviews new services and technologies related to the deployment of and investment in telecommunications infrastructure throughout the state. This report also comments on the use of advanced telecommunications infrastructure for distance learning, libraries, and access to health care. A new section has been added that outlines Wireless E911 grant activities.

The Commission's evidence suggests that the telecommunications network is no longer a significant limiting factor for the improvement of distance learning, interconnection of libraries, access to health care, and services to persons with disabilities. Although there are some areas of the state where broadband for these purposes is still limited, the most significant limiting factors are the ability of customers to pay for services, the ability of advanced service providers to recover costs for providing service and the development of equipment that will allow individuals in the home to use the telecommunications infrastructure.

The Internet has become the medium of choice for distance education programs for higher education so there is less reliance on dedicated high-speed networks. Nearly all libraries have access to the Internet and growth continues in the number of libraries with high-speed dedicated access.

For individuals with disabilities, the focus remains on the development of assistive technologies that enable the more effective use of telecommunications infrastructure by improving access to computers, web pages and Internet connections.


The American Transmission Company (ATC) was created in 1998 by a consortium of Wisconsin electric utility companies to own and manage transmission infrastructure in the state. Forest County is in ATC’s Zone 2, which consists of mainly the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and a few counties in Wisconsin.

Needs and limitations in ATC's transmission network are assessed and grouped into "umbrella plans" by zone. The Northern Zones Umbrella Plan is divided into two phases. Phase 1 projects are ATC's most effective means to address needs and issues from both system performance and cost perspectives. The conceptual Phase 2 projects are what ATC believes will meet the long-term needs in the area, but will require further analyses.
The key issues that this umbrella plan was developed to address are:

1. Inadequate transfer capability between Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula;
2. Elimination of other transmission service constraints;
3. Long-term load serving needs in the Rhinelander Loop and throughout the Upper Peninsula;
4. Replacement of aging infrastructure in poor conditions;
5. Elimination of operating guides, remedial action schemes and special protection schemes; and
6. Accommodation of potential future generation.

Phase 1 project in Forest County:
In 2008, completed a new 138 kV line between Cranberry and Conover, and rebuild and convert a 69 kV line between Conover and Plains from 69 kV to 138 kV.

Phase 2 projects in Forest County:
Construct a new 345 kV transmission line between power plants in Wausau and Presque Isle. The potential path through Forest County could parallel USH 8. Rebuild or construct a new 69 kV or 138 kV line between Goodman and Laona.

B. Issues

- Timber harvesting to clear right-of-way for electric transmission lines
- Recreational Amenities
- Access to Broadband
- Emergency Preparedness
5.2 Inventory & Trends

A. Water-Related Facilities

1. Drinking water

Groundwater quality in Forest County is generally good. No private well samples have tested unsafe for levels of nitrate, atrazine, or arsenic. See the Natural Resources Chapter of this Plan for a description of the groundwater quality and quantity available.

The City of Crandon, the towns of Laona and Wabeno, the Blackwell Job Corps (USDA), the Sokaogon Chippewa Community, and the Potawatomi Community in Carter provide water supplies for domestic and commercial use.

The City of Crandon maintains a ground reservoir on a hill, and a water tower in the downtown that are filled by two high capacity wells. The City does not have a wellhead protection plan or ordinance.

The Town of Laona has one water tower and one high capacity well that serve most of the downtown, the golf course, and residential development along the western and eastern sides of Silver Lake. A wellhead protection plan or ordinance does not exist.

The Sokaogon Chippewa Community on Mole Lake operates a well and water tower to serve the whole community.

The Town of Wabeno has a water tower and two high capacity wells that serve most of the downtown. Both of Wabeno's municipal wells have wellhead protection plans and ordinances to protect the recharge areas from pollution. In the Carter area of Wabeno, the Potawatomi Community operates a water supply system that serves the casino and surrounding development.

The Blackwell Job Corps, operated by the Forest Service (USDA), has a water tower and two wells on site to provide water for the campus living and instructional buildings. A wellhead protection plan or ordinance does not exist.

There are 8 active high capacity wells in Forest County:
- 5 are used for municipal water supply;
- 2 are used for irrigation in Nashville; and
- 1 is used for industrial purposes in Lincoln.

There are no concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in Forest County, so no animal waste management ordinance is needed. By definition, CAFOs have greater than 1000 animal units. CAFOs are required under their
Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permits to practice proper manure management and ensure that adverse impacts to water quality do not occur.

2. Wastewater

Municipal wastewater treatment facilities serve most of the City of Crandon, and the downtowns of Laona, Wabeno, Mole Lake, Blackwell Job Corp, and the Carter development. All six treatment plants discharge treated effluent through absorption lagoons to the groundwater and surface water.

In Forest County, a combination of County and state regulations control the installation and maintenance of privately owned wastewater treatment systems (POWTS). Traditionally, on-site disposal systems have relied on drain-fields or mounds that spread effluent over a large area allowing waste to be dispersed without adversely affecting groundwater quality. The success of these systems is dependent on the depth and permeability of the soils in which they are installed.

In 1999 the Department of Commerce proposed a revision of the plumbing standards under which POWTS were regulated (COMM 83). Unlike the old code, the new rules prescribed criteria for end results, or the required degree of purity for water discharged from the system, in addition to the specific characteristics regarding installation. A number of newer technologies that were not as dependent on soil depth and percolation characteristics were approved for use as part of this revision. Although these technologies had been in use in other states they were not permitted in Wisconsin.

Soil suitability characteristics in Forest County vary widely for installation of POWTS. Much of the county has adequate soils for on-site systems. Some areas in the county are listed as "more susceptible," which means that moderate to severe limitations exist for these systems exist. There are also some areas in the county that have a severe rating, which indicates soils not desirable for the operation of a soil absorption system, because of at least one of the following conditions: poor soil permeability, high water tables, periodic flooding, shallow depth to bedrock, or steep slopes. The Wisconsin Fund offers financial assistance to homeowners who meet financial criteria to replace failed septic systems.

3. Stormwater

Storm sewer systems exist down the main streets in Crandon, Laona, Mole Lake, and Wabeno. The City of Crandon's system along Main Street was rebuilt in 2002. Wabeno's system was constructed in 1972.
4. **Dams**

There are 32 dams in Forest County; 3 of which are listed as having a large or significant hazard potential if they broke; 8 of the dams are abandoned; and the remainder have a low hazard potential. Hiles and Laona both have significant hazard dams, and Nashville has a high hazard dam. The Forest County All Hazard Mitigation Plan describes how to assess hazard potential for a dam, and how to mitigate its risk.

**B. Solid Waste & Recycling Related Facilities**

The city contracts with Waste Management, private hauler, for weekly pickup. There has been interest in maintaining a transfer/recycling center in the City.

Most towns maintain waste and recycling transfer sites, since no active landfills exist in Forest County.

In 1990, the state passed a Solid Waste Reduction, Recovery and Recycling Law. One of the primary purposes of the law was to encourage recycling. Unlike solid waste that is landfilled, recycled material has an economic market value, and will continue to be sold as long as markets exist.

**C. Public Works**

1. **Town Halls & Garages**

Each town and the City of Crandon have a public building used for government meetings and other public gatherings. Adjacent to most of these buildings are garages for the storage of road maintenance equipment as well as firefighting equipment in several cases. Not all towns have government buildings, garages, and waste & recycling transfer sites next to each other.

2. **Cemeteries**

Cemeteries serve as unique and tangible links to our past. There are fourteen cemeteries located throughout the county. Many of the existing cemeteries have substantial capacity, and there are many undeveloped areas throughout the County suitable for new cemeteries.

**D. Public Safety**

1. **Sheriff/Police**

The Wisconsin State Patrol, the Forest County Sheriff’s Department, the Laona Police Department, the Wabeno Police Department, and the City of Crandon Police Department are the law enforcement agencies that operate within Forest
County. The State Patrol has statewide jurisdiction on all public roads but operates mainly on State and U.S. numbered highways as a matter of general practice. The County Sheriff provides general law enforcement services throughout the County. Crandon’s police serve the city, and Laona’s police serve the town.

The Wabeno Police Department’s K-9 unit is available by contract to all communities in Forest County.

Historically, the rural and sparsely settled areas of Forest County have needed minimal police service. However, as development increases there may be increased demand for law enforcement services.

Besides the Sheriff, the department has 16 full-time officers, 19 jail employees and dispatchers. The City of Crandon has 3 full-time officers. The County Sheriff’s Department provides Enhanced 911 dispatch services to the City and the rest of the county. The Forest County Jail in Crandon serves the entire county.

2. Fire

Fire protection services in Forest County are provided by: volunteer fire departments in most towns and Crandon, the Forest Service, and the DNR, along with a complex pattern of mutual aid assistance agreements between towns.

Insurance Services Office's (ISO’s) Public Protection Classification (PPC™) program is used by fire insurance companies to assess the fire risk in a community. ISO's PPC™ is rated on a class scale of 1 to 10, with Class 1 representing the best protection and Class 10 representing an essentially unprotected community.

3. Jail

The Forest County Jail was built in 1996-1997, and is behind the County Courthouse in Crandon. The jail and courthouse are not connected. All prisoners for the County Sheriff's Department as well as those from the City of Crandon are held in the jail. A staff of 19 full-time jailers/dispatchers administers the jail.

4. Emergency Medical Service (EMS)

Crandon Area Rescue Squad in Crandon, Laona Rescue Inc. in Laona, and United Area Rescue Squad Inc. in Wabeno all have rescue services stationed in Forest County. An additional ambulance will be located in southern Nashville.
when the new building is complete. Many towns contract with these and other adjoining rescue service providers as shown on the Emergency Services Map.

E. Health Care

Forest County residents access health care in clinics and hospitals that are within and adjoining Forest County. The most frequently used hospitals that provide 24-hour emergency service and critical care are:

- Eagle River Memorial Hospital in Eagle River;
- Saint Mary’s Hospital in Rhinelander;
- Northstar Community Hospital in Iron River, Michigan;
- Dickinson Memorial Hospital in Iron Mountain, Michigan; and
- Aspirus Langlade Hospital in Antigo.

Forest County residents use the following medical clinics:

- Marshfield Clinics in Rhinelander, Minocqua
- Ministry Health Clinic in Crandon and Laona
- Florence Medical Center in Florence
- Dickinson Clinic in Iron Mountain
- VA Clinic Rhinelander
- VA Clinic Iron Mountain
- Aspirus Clinics in Elcho, Antigo, Rhinelander and Phelps
- Potawatomi Health and Wellness Center in Crandon
- Sokaogon Mole Lake Clinic in Crandon
- Nicolet Medical Center in Lakewood.

AGI Healthcare of Crandon is a 50 bed nursing home. Nu Roc Community Healthcare is a privately run facility in Blackwell for about 60 elderly residents. Hoffman’s Paradise assisted living facility in Armstrong Creek

Forest County residents use home health services from VNA Home Health Wausau and Ministry Home Health Rhinelander. There is also a VA nursing home in Iron Mountain, MI, has 48 beds.

F. Education, Recreation & Culture

1. Libraries

There are three public libraries in the county: Crandon Public Library, Edith Evans Community Library in Laona, and Wabeno Public Library. The Cultural Resource Center & Library, east of Crandon, is owned and operated by the Potawatomi Community for the public to enjoy. Each public library provides library services to all residents of the county, and residents of all Wisconsin
Valley Library Service counties by means of the intersystem loan agreement. Forest County levies a tax for library services that is distributed 30 percent for each public library, and 10 percent for Forest County Library Board operation. Forest County benefits from Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS) membership in several ways. Interlibrary loan (ILL) provides local access to the resources of all WVLS libraries in the following additional counties: Clark, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, and Taylor. In 2008, Forest County libraries sent 6,070 items from their collections on interloan for patrons at other non-Forest County libraries, and Forest County residents borrowed 5,442 items on interloan from other libraries. Valley Catalog (V-Cat) enables patrons at one member library to see the collections of all member libraries online.

In 2008, two Forest County public libraries were members of V-Cat (Wabeno was not). V-Cat is accessible from any internet connected computer. Collection Enrichment is a program that assembles deposit collections of large print books, audio cassettes, CDs, and playaways. Member libraries, nursing homes, and apartments for the elderly may check out a deposit collection for three-months. These collections help keep local collections fresh, and stretch local library budgets. Deposit collections provided Forest County libraries with about $27,028 worth of materials in 2008. Online Resources include several annual database subscriptions (HeritageQuest, NetLibrary, NovelList, Gale LegalForms, Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center, p4a Antiques Reference, and others) that are available for library patrons. Courier Services are supported by WVLS to enable public libraries to send and receive library materials (postage free) to and from most libraries throughout the State of Wisconsin.

Libraries that participate in V-Cat receive an additional courier stop each week. The value of these courier services to public libraries in Forest County was $5,904 in 2008. TEACH high speed internet lines are part of the BadgerNet Conversion Network (BCN) configuration, which goes to WVLS rather than through a commercial internet service provider (ISP). WVLS uses WiscNet as its ISP at an annual cost of about $11,300 in 2008 that is shared by all participating libraries. If an individual library went directly to WiscNet, then its cost would be about $5,000 annually.

2. Parks and Trails

Parks

Public recreation areas in the county include about 52 publicly owned access points to lakes and rivers in the county; see the Ownership & Recreation Facilities Map for locations. About 60 percent of the public access points are in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. By providing access to water-based recreational opportunities these facilities broaden the range of options available to residents and visitors alike.
School grounds, including playgrounds, ball diamonds, tennis courts, soccer fields, and basketball hoops are also available to the public during non-school hours. There are 4 public and 1 private school grounds throughout the county; see the School District & Boundaries Map for locations.

There are 5 school forests, totaling about 193 acres, in addition to the 10,848 acres of County forests, all open to the public, although some areas are closed to motorized and non-motorized vehicles. These areas are described in the Natural Resources Chapter of this Plan, and shown on the Ownership & Recreation Facilities Map.

The City of Crandon, and the Towns of Laona, Wabeno, Blackwell, Armstrong Creek, Caswell, and Ross provide neighborhood and community level parks. These facilities provide opportunities for active and passive recreation experiences. Forest County maintains Memorial Park on the south end of Lake Metonga. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages a wildlife area and six natural areas for public enjoyment. The DNR and the Commissioner of Public Lands have extensive holdings in the county that are mainly interspersed with national forestlands. The Towns of Armstrong Creek and Wabeno both have town forests. All public lands are described in the Natural Resources Chapter of this Plan and in the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

See the Ownership & Recreation Facilities Map for land and facility locations and the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan to view public and private outdoor recreation locations.

Trails

The Nicolet State Trail stretches 32 miles through Forest County in the same corridor built by railroad companies in the late 19th century to open up Wisconsin's pine and hardwood forests for the timber industry. Both ends of the trail connect into adjacent Florence and Oconto counties. The trail is surfaced with highway-grade compacted gravel. Walking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) uses are permitted on the trail. Two new trailheads are planned. The northern trailhead will be off of County Highway O, about one mile west of Highway 139, and the southern trailhead will be in Wabeno, between the town park and logging museum. The Nicolet State Trail and the Wolf River State Trail are shown on the Ownership & Recreation Facilities Map.

The Wolf River State Trail was completed in 2010. The Forest County segment runs 14.4 miles from Crandon south to the Forest/Langlade county line, and continues into Langlade County all the way south to White Lake. When completed, the trail will be open to walking, bicycling, ATVs (year-round), and
snowmobiles. Other bicycle facilities are described in the Transportation Chapter.

Forest County snowmobile trails cross every town, and connect every community to each other and to adjacent counties. Over 405 miles of state funded trails are groomed and maintained by six active snowmobile clubs. Each snowmobile trail is named: 100 Mile Snow Safari, Black Bear, Brule River, Lumberjack Memorial, Three Lakes, and Tombstone-Pickerel.

Five snowshoe and cross country ski trails exist in Forest County. Anvil Trail is 12-miles of trails in Alvin. Ed's Lake Trail is 6-miles of trails in Wabeno. Otter Springs Trail is 5-miles of trails east of Crandon. Hemlock Ski Trail is 2-miles of trails south of Crandon.

There has been recent Rail to Trails projects in the area that have accommodated snowmobiles and ATVs. There has been some discussion of a multi-use trail along USH 8 from Crandon to Oneida County.

Currently there has been considerable discussion related to the development of a large destination Motorized Recreation Area (MRA). Two locations have been proposed, one south of USH 8 in the Town of Crandon and north of County G in the Town of Caswell. Both of these and possibly other sites would need to be studied further, 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.

3. Schools

Three of the five school districts that serve Forest County residents have schools in Forest County. New Hope Christian School is a K-8 parochial school in Crandon. Crandon, Laona, and Wabeno school districts each have a grade-, middle-, and high school as shown on the School & District Boundaries Map. Goodman-Armstrong Creek and Three Lakes school districts have schools next to Forest County.

Enrollment is declining in all three school districts and the trend is projected to continue into the future. Over the coming years, the major issue for these school districts will be to compensate for a shrinking student population while
maintaining high-quality education. To combat declining enrollment, the Crandon, Laona, and Wabeno school districts cooperatively create distance learning classes between the school districts to provide additional classes that would not otherwise be taught.

Most of the county is in the Nicolet Technical College district, except for parts of Armstrong Creek and Caswell that are in the Green Bay Technical College district.

4. Museums

Museums exist in the City of Crandon, the Potawatomi Community, the Town of Laona, and the Town of Wabeno. On the courthouse grounds is a decommissioned tank, a historical museum, and a deer enclosure. The Forest County Historical Museum in Crandon is located in what is known locally as the “Old Carter House.” The Potawatomi Community maintains the Cultural Center Library & Museum along USH 8, just east of downtown Crandon. Wabeno Neighborhood Park in downtown Wabeno has an outdoor replica of an old logging camp, and the Wabeno Logging Museum. A non-profit group in downtown Laona operates Camp Five Museum and Lumberjack Steam Train. The historic Dinesen-Motzfeldt-Hettinger Log House in Mole Lake is undergoing restorations, and then will become a museum for the Sokaogon Chippewa Community.

5. Day Care

The Department of Children & Families list of licensed child-care providers available in Forest County shows nine licensed providers. Four of the providers are group (over nine children) facilities, and the other five are family (less than eight) facilities.

Licensed child-care provider locations as of 2010:
- City of Crandon: 2 group and 2 family providers;
- Wabeno: 1 group and 1 family providers;
- Laona: 1 group provider;
- Argonne: 1 family provider; and
- Mole Lake Community: 1 family provider.

G. Energy & Telecommunication

1. Electric

The Wisconsin Public Service serves the largest part of the county. WE Energies serves part of the Towns of Alvin and Hiles. Two high-voltage transmission lines traverse the county. A 69 kV transmission line crosses the
Town of Alvin, north of State Highway 70; and the second is a 115 kV line that enters the City of Crandon from Monico along USH 8. Both lines are shown on the Community Facilities Map.

2. Gas

Natural gas transmission across Forest County generally follows USH 8 from the Town of Crandon through the Town of Armstrong Creek. This gas line is tapped by Wisconsin Public Service to provide local delivery in another pipeline that generally serves the City of Crandon, the downtowns of Laona and Wabeno, and a 32-mile pipeline from Argonne to Hiles. The local delivery pipeline is shown on the Utilities & Community Facilities map. The remainder of the county depends upon bottled gas from local suppliers.

3. Telecommunication

There are six telephone providers in the county: CenturyLink, Charter Communications, Charter Fiberlink LLC, Powercom, Frontier, and Verizon. High-speed internet access is available throughout the southern half of Forest County. Most of Forest County’s developed areas where cable TV exists, also has access to high-speed internet over the cable TV network. Digital subscriber line (DSL) is broadband over existing copper wire phone lines. Delivery of DSL service has a maximum distance of 18,000 feet from a digital switch, of which, several exist in Forest County.

Depending upon which cellular communication network used, most of Forest County south of USH 8 has cellular phone coverage. Ten telecommunications towers, which may have cellular phone antennas on them, exist in the county, and more are projected for construction in the future.

H. Utility & Community Facility Programs

Providing public infrastructure—roads, sewer and water service, schools, police and fire protection—is one of the major functions of local government. In addition to these public services, both public and private entities provide electricity and telephone service as well as such specialized services as child-care, health-care and solid-waste disposal. Taken together these constitute the utilities and community facilities that represent much of the backbone of modern life. Beyond what these facilities do for us, they also represent a huge investment of public and private resources.

The efficient utilization of these resources is one of the basic principles of comprehensive planning. Already in-place infrastructure is a public asset that must be safeguarded for the future, both to conserve and protect environmental values and to maximize the benefits of economic growth. Development that bypasses or ignores existing infrastructure resources is
wasteful of the public investment that they represent. Development patterns that require the extension of utilities and the expansion of public facilities while existing facilities go unused at other locations is probably not the best use of scarce public resources. Both the state and federal governments offer programs that assist communities with the development of critical infrastructure and facilities. These programs are listed in more detail in the Economic Development chapter of this plan.

5.3 Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Goal 1: Strive to provide the best quality public services, such as schools and libraries, law enforcement, fire and EMS, to all the citizens of the County.

Objectives:

1. Direct more intensive development to areas where a full array of utilities, community facilities, and public services are available.

2. Provide for law enforcement, ambulance, volunteer fire and first responder services to residents, whether by the county or by local units of government.

3. Support high quality educational opportunities for all residents.

Policies:

1. Ensure that community facilities (i.e.: schools, public safety buildings, health care, etc.) have the space requirements and supplies that are necessary to serve Forest County residents.

2. Make more extensive use of the Wisconsin Fund to upgrade failing Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) on qualifying properties.

3. Encourage Crandon and Laona to create wellhead protection plans and wellhead protection ordinances for their municipal water supplies.

4. Encourage Wabeno to enroll in Valley Catalog (V-Cat) and Internet Central Site Service for the library.
5. Maintain and improve County buildings, including installation of energy efficient windows and doors as well as energy efficient appliances and heating systems. Investigate renewable energy systems for County buildings including solar, wind, or biomass systems. Improve handicap accessibility for all County buildings.

6. Continue cooperation with electric providers in location of transmission lines. Identify additional needs to the electric utility as they become apparent.

Goal 2: Maintain and enhance year-round recreational opportunities and facilities within the county while minimizing user conflicts.

Objectives:

1. Support implementation of the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

2. Review Forest County Subdivision Ordinance to promote recreational access to land and water.

Policies:

1. Work with and support clubs and organizations related to the maintenance and development of recreational facilities and activities.

2. Continually evaluate the need, conditions, and maintenance requirements of public access to waterways.

3. Encourage land acquisition and development strategies for parks, as outlined in the County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

4. Continue to examine the development of a destination MRA within the County.

Goal 3: Prepare and minimize natural hazard events.

Objectives:

1. Support implementation of mitigation strategies from the Forest County All Hazard Mitigation Plan.

2. Cooperate with utilities, local governments, tribal communities, DNR, Forest Service, and the local American Red Cross Chapter to co-locate communication systems and equipment across the county.
Policies:

1. Promote increased use of NOAA Weather Radios.

2. Require new communication towers to provide co-location areas for potential sheriff and highway department radio antennas.

3. Support dam/drainage way repair and removal where appropriate to minimize flooding in the County.

4. Implement the other recommendations from the All Hazard Mitigation Plan.
Chapter 6: Economic Development
CHAPTER 6:
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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B. Issues

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B. Major Employers
C. Economic Analysis
D. Labor Force Analysis
E. Incomes & Wages
F. Economic Development Infrastructure
G. Economic Development Programs

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Table 2: Major Employers
Table 3: Location Quotient
Table 4: Labor Force Indicators
6.1 Background

This is the sixth of nine chapters that comprise the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. This chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a “Compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities”.

An analysis of the economic base and labor force of Forest County is included. The different economic development programs available at the local, regional, state, and federal levels are also included.

A. Previous Plans:

All planning processes should include a review of previous planning processes. Below is a review of the three most relevant economic development-planning efforts.

Forest County Economic Development Strategy, 2005

This project was undertaken as a result of the interest in the creation of some type of county-wide cooperative approach towards economic development. This strategic plan was prepared with that goal in mind. The Joint City-County Economic Development Committee held a series of meetings to develop the plan utilizing the assistance of the NCWRPC planning staff to facilitate the planning process and for the publication of the written plan. Following several planning meetings, the 2005 Forest County Economic Development Strategy was created.

An inventory of the basic economic situation in Forest County may be found in this document, including an assessment of strengths and weaknesses. Current issues are identified by way of committee discussions. Several organizational options for the creation of an economic development entity or corporation are discussed as well. Finally, strategies and recommendations are provided to assist decision makers in prioritizing needs before proceeding to implementation. Much of the economic analysis information is drawn from that planning effort.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Forest County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWPRC) is the agency that is responsible for maintaining that federal designation. As part of maintaining that designation, the NCWPRC annually prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report. The report serves to summarize and
assess economic development activities of the past year and present new and modified program strategies for the upcoming year. In addition this report identifies potential public works projects for funding within the region.

Key findings from this regional level plan involve an inventory of the physical geography of the Region and its resident population. Labor, income, and employment data are covered with analysis of the economic status of the Region. Construction, wholesale trade, retail, transportation, and manufacturing all have grown rapidly since 1980. Finance, insurance, real estate, and services have lagged behind national averages.


The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) developed this plan in compliance with the State of Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Law. One component of this plan is the Economic Development Element. Within this element, economic indicators are analyzed on a regional level and economic infrastructure is inventoried. The element offers some general regional goals and policies for the development of the regional economy over the next two decades.

Key findings from this regional level plan are: 1) the Region’s labor force and participation rates are increasing and unemployment is decreasing; 2) primary export industries include agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, transportation, communication, and retail; 3) the Region’s economy is mostly comprised of slow growth industry but it is shifting into a service based economy which shows much faster growth rates; 4) the Region is a competitive location for new industry starts compared to national average; 5) the Region has several available industrial parks; 6) the Region will benefit most from the creation of new or expansion of existing industries.

**B. Issues:**

The planning process includes the identification of issues. These are the things that need to be addressed in the plan.

- **Commercial and Industrial Development**

Not all available sites are capable of offering the wide range of services necessary to appeal to all types of industrial development. Access to a major interstate highway is unavailable and the county has limited rail service. Forest County also suffers from lack of diversification in its industrial economy leading to a heavy reliance on relatively few industries. Such dependence means that local employment, as well as commercial retail trade, goes up and
down with the business cycles for the dominant local industry. Continued economic diversification is a key to the community’s growth.

- Income and Employment Levels

Although the county has made progress toward closing the gap over the last twenty years, income levels still are below state and federal levels and the unemployment rate exceeds both state and federal levels. A focus should be placed on living wage jobs.

- Commuting Patterns

There are about 201 more persons leaving the county for employment opportunities, than there are persons coming into the county. The majority of those leaving are going to Oneida County, followed by Marinette, Langlade and Oconto County. These 201 persons represents indicate an available workforce. The goal should be to balance the flow in and out of the county. This is based on 2000 Census information.

- Lack of Investment and Working Capital

Forest County lacks the investment and working capital necessary for entrepreneurial start-ups and expansions. In addition, local banks and other lending institutions are unwilling to take much risk on these types of business ventures. Entrepreneurs and existing business owners looking to expand are prevented from starting businesses or expanding unless they already have significant company value or personal wealth. This limits new business activity to a select few in Forest County while most potential businesses look for locations with readily available investors.

- Limited Taxable Land

Although Forest County is relatively large in land area, government owns a majority of the land or the land is otherwise tax exempt. Federal lands qualify for the National Forest Income program which provides monies to the local government and state lands provide similar monies through the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program, however, this funding is not equivalent to the amount of taxes the local government would receive from private land in the same use. The Nicolet National Forest comprises the entire north and east parts of the county; additional land is comprised of county forestlands as well. Forest County also has two tribal nations with tax-exempt property. Consequently, County government must provide countywide services with a limited amount of taxable revenue. Basic services such as road maintenance, law enforcement, and fire protection are very difficult to pay for while still keeping taxes at a level commensurate with Forest County’s relative standard
of living. As Forest County’s density increases, government operations will become more expensive as well. This dilemma has been exacerbated by an increasing number of property owners choosing to put their land into the Forest Crop Program (which effectively takes the land off the local tax rolls).

- Conflict with State and Federal Government

Forest County is subject to a variety of state and federal laws intended to regulate the use of forestland and water bodies. These regulations, while intended to serve the interests of the state and/or national public, can sometimes overwhelm the needs or desires of the local population. Forest County’s natural resources are often times prevented from being used to benefit the development of the local economy by restrictions and regulations. Local businesses that are dependent upon the existence of the forest are subject to limitations by US Forest Service (USFS) restrictions. These restrictions often inhibit the businesses from realizing their full potential. The USFS heavily regulates all forestry practices in the national forest and also restricts access to forest roads. Both of these restrictions affect the forestry and tourist industries respectively.

- Workforce Experience and Employment Levels

Although the county has made progress toward closing the gap over the last twenty years, income levels are still below state and federal levels and the unemployment rate exceeds both state and federal levels. Recruiting skilled workers to the area is difficult due to the lack of major market amenities and lack of multiple job opportunities. Skilled and professional workers earn higher incomes and can therefore raise the per capita income level of the County. Many businesses require skilled and professional workers to operate and will seek labor markets where these people reside in adequate numbers.

- Economic Patterns of the Tourist Economy

Recreation and tourism comprises a large component of Forest County’s economy. The tourist economy is highly dependent upon the seasonal weather and therefore highly unpredictable. An uncharacteristically cool summer or warm winter can spell disaster for businesses that depend upon this income. Tourist-based businesses that are exclusively dependent upon either winter or summer activities also face a difficult challenge as they strive to generate income in the off-season to sustain them until the next season. In 2008 tourism spending in Forest County was estimated to be over $46 million.
Retaining Youth Employment/Qualified Workers

Like many rural areas, Forest County has difficulty in retaining its young people. High school graduates often move to larger cities for more opportunities, higher pay, or to further education. Meanwhile, local workers lose a generation of new employees that are necessary to maintain existing business operations. This low supply of available workers results in firms hiring workers that may be less than qualified for their duties or that may be mismatched between capabilities and expectations.

Intergovernmental Communication

County government, the City of Crandon, Town governments, and Tribal governments all affect one another with their decisions. Historically, Forest County has not benefited from a great degree of communication between these entities. Poor relationships between government entities can lead to internal competition and redundant economic development efforts. Forest County needs a venue in which governments can work cooperatively to the benefit of the County as a whole.
6.2 Inventory & Trends

The purpose of analyzing the County’s economy and identifying economic trends in this element is to answer some obvious questions. Which industries in the County have lagged in terms of economic performance? What are the underlying causes of poor economic performance in certain industries? What measures can be taken to address the economic problems that exist? When answering these questions, it is customary to use a comparative analysis between the County, the State of Wisconsin, and the nation.

The analysis helps to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each industry sector in the County thereby identifying potential strategies for economic development. The information presented in this analysis has been collected from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

A. Economic Sectors

Overall, in 2009, there were 2,924 persons employed in the fourteen basic economic sectors in the county. That is an increase slightly more than 55 percent since 1990. Those basic economic sectors are presented below. They are: Government; Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing; Mining; Construction; Manufacturing; Transportation & Utilities; Wholesale Trade; Retail Trade; Finance, Insurance & Real Estate; Educational Services; Health Care Services; Arts Entertainment & Recreation; Accommodation & Food Services; and Services. See Table 1.

Between 1990 and 2009 the three fastest growing sectors were arts entertainment & recreation, services, and government. In terms of total employment, government is the largest segment of the economy, followed by Arts Entertainment & Recreation; Educational Services; and Health Care Services.

The expansion of the arts entertainment & recreation sector was due to the Native American gaming in Forest County. The State of Wisconsin entered into gaming compacts with the Forest County Potawatomi and the Mole Lake, which lead the construction of two casino’s in the early 1990s. Table 2 shows that the Northern Lights Casino and the Mole Lake Casino are two of the largest employers in Forest County.

It should be noted that the number of employees in certain sectors, particularly those workers engaged in agriculture, forestry & fishing, may be understated because this information utilizes Department of Workforce Development data; those who are self employed or work in family businesses are not reflected in this data. Note that the employment totals may not match because of nondisclosure in some sectors. Some changes were made to the data collection
procedures between 2000 and 2009, which makes some sector comparisons difficult.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Employment by Sector</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agric., For. &amp; Fishing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation And Comm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fin., Ins. &amp; Real Estate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts Entertainment &amp; Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; Food Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Workforce Development; ES 202 Reports, 1st Quarter; 1990, 2000 & 2009 NCWRPC

1. Government: Between 1990 and 2009, this sector grew by 135 percent, which was greater than the state and national growth rates of 22 percent and 27 percent respectively. Government is the largest sector in the county, representing 839 jobs at the local, state and federal levels.

2. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: Although the data shows no employment in this sector for 2000 and 2009, there are actually many people employed in this sector that are not reflected in DWD data.

3. Mining: Although the data shows no employment in mining, there are actually limited numbers of people employed in this sector that are not reflected in DWD data. During the time both national and state employment has decreased in the mining sector. Non-metallic mining activity within the county typically involves sand and gravel (aggregates) extraction for local use.

4. Construction: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector decreased by 27 percent, this is vastly different from the state and national growth rates of 58 and 57 percent. Over 917 persons are employed in this sector. Construction is the eighth-smallest sector, accounting for about 6 percent of total employment.
5. Manufacturing: Between 1990 and 2009 this sector experienced a steady growth of 4 percent, which is very different from both the state and national rates which experienced decreases over this timeframe. About 220 persons are employed in this sector which makes manufacturing the seventh largest sector in Forest County. According to County Business Patterns, there were 21 manufacturing establishments in the county with total annual payroll over $8 million dollars in 2000. By 2007, there were 22 establishments with an annual payroll over $9 million.

6. Transportation, and Communication: Between 1990 and 2009, this sector added 15 jobs which is an increase of 13 percent. About 128 persons are employed in this sector. Transportation and Communication accounts for over 4 percent of total employment in Forest County.

7. Wholesale Trade: Although the data shows no employment in this sector, there are actually limited numbers of people employed in this sector that are not reflected in DWD data.

8. Retail Trade: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew by 3 percent which was less than the state and growth rate. About 239 persons are employed in this sector. Retail is the fourth largest sector in Forest County accounting for over 8 percent of total employment. According to County Business Patterns, there were 40 retail establishments in the county with total annual payroll exceeding $5 million dollars in 2000. By 2007, there were 35 establishments with an annual payroll over $4 million.

9. Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate: Between 1990 and 2009 this sector added 40 jobs to the local economy. This resulted in 68 percent growth rate for the sector, which was more than both the state and national growth rates. About 98 persons are employed in this sector, which accounts for over 3 percent of total employment.

10. Educational Services: Between 1990 and 2009, this sector grew 9 percent. About 327 persons work in this sector which makes this the third largest sector in the county. Educational services comprise just over 11 percent of total employment.

11. Health Care Services: Between 1990 and 2009, this sector grew 34 percent. About 287 persons work in this sector which makes this the fourth largest sector in the county and comprises about 10 percent of total employment. According to County Business Patterns, there were 16 establishments in the county with total annual payroll exceeding $4 million dollars in 2000. By 2007, there were 19 establishments with an annual payroll near $6 million.
12. Arts, Entertainment & Recreation: Between 1990 and 2009, this sector grew by an astounding 7083 percent. The growth in the sector can be directly attributed to the construction of the Northern Lights Casino and the Mole Lake Casino. About 431 persons work in this sector, which makes this the second largest sector in the county. This accounts for over 14 percent of total employment in Forest County.

13. Accommodation & Food Services: Between 1990 and 2009, this sector grew 65 percent. About 230 persons work in this sector, which makes this the fourth largest sector in the county comprising just over 10 percent of total employment. According to County Business Patterns, there were 33 establishments in the county with total annual payroll exceeding $2 million dollars in 2000. By 2007, there were 38 establishments with an annual payroll over $1.5 million.

14. Services: Between 1990 and 2009, this sector added 72 jobs to Forest County. About 91 persons are employed in this sector making it the fifth smallest sector, accounting for over 3 percent of total employment.

In 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau County Business Patterns, there were a total of 278 establishments in the county with an annual payroll of about $44,097,000. The most establishments were in transportation and warehousing (39), followed by accommodation & food service (38) establishments, retail trade establishments (35), Construction Establishments (27) and Other Services (25).

B. Major Employers

Forest County’s largest employers are displayed in Table 2. The largest employer in the County is the Forest County Potawatomi, followed by the Northern Lights Casino. WD Flooring is the largest private employer in the County.
Table 2:
Major Employers, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer Name</th>
<th>Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest County Potawatomi Tribal Governments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Lights Casino Casinos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mole Lake Casino Casinos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School District of Crandon Elementary &amp; secondary schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of Forest Executive &amp; legislative offices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WD Flooring Other millwork, including flooring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizconsin Group Inc Nursing Care facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School District of Wabeno Elementary &amp; secondary schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schaefer's Food Mart Supermarkets and other grocery stores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nu-Roc Community Healthcare Nursing Care facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wisconsin DWD 2008 and NCWRPC.

C. Economic Analysis

The primary technique used here to analyze the county’s economic base is called the “Location Quotient”. The technique is commonly used to provide detailed economic information about the local economy and industry sectors within the economy.

1. Location Quotient

This analysis technique compares local, state and national employment levels by economic sector. The result of this analysis is a numeric value called a location quotient. The model is derived from the premise that the local economy may be divided into two sectors: 1) a “basic” or non-local sector and 2) a “non-basic” or local sector.

Those employers providing goods and services that are purchased or consumed by customers outside the study (the county in this case) are considered to be basic employers. Conversely, goods and services consumed by the local community are considered non-basic. Thus, economic success of the community is measured by its ability to bring in money from outside of the community; the community offers goods and services that are sought out by other regions that do not have them. This type of economy is also known as an export economy and is usually the overall goal of many economic development programs.

The location quotient model uses employment information for both the County and the nation by industry and compares their ratios of sectoral employment to total employment. Each industry sector is assigned a location quotient value which in turn is used to identify those employees considered export, or “basic” within a given industry sector. “Non-basic” employees are those workers whose
wages are derived from money circulating within the existing local economy. In any community, certain goods and services simply cannot be obtained locally and consumers must look elsewhere. This is known as an industry sector “leakage”. Too many leakages can result in a declining economy as consumers continue to spend their money in communities other than their own.

Fortunately, Forest County has more basic employees than non-basic, however, if existing industries are not retained and new opportunities are not created in basic industries such as manufacturing, this status could change in the future.

The location quotient can be described by the following equation:

\[ LQ_i = \frac{e_i^t}{e_T^t} / \frac{E_i^t}{E_T^t} \]

where:
- \( e_i^t \) = regional (county) employment in industry \( i \) in year \( t \)
- \( e_T^t \) = total regional (county) employment in year \( t \)
- \( E_i^t \) = national employment in industry \( i \) in year \( t \)
- \( E_T^t \) = total national employment in year \( t \)

If that number is greater than 1.00, it is determined to be an exporting sector, while if it is below 1.00, it is determined to be an importing sector. Exports bring money from outside the county into the local economy and imports represent local dollars flowing outside the county. Table 4 provides a summary of the location quotient analysis results of those categories that exceed 1.00.

The data analyzed is from the U.S. Census, County Business Patterns. That data set examines only the private sector, since that is where most economic growth is desired. The information presented is broken into detailed categories similar to the industry composites utilized by the North American Industry Classification Standard (NAICS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Category</th>
<th>Location Quotient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services (except Public Administration)</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1998 and 2007 County Business Patterns
• Manufacturing

Manufacturing is always an important component of any economy given its tendency to provide more and higher paying jobs than most other sectors. This category has a Location Quotient of 1.27.

• Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

The Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector comprises establishments that specialize in performing professional, scientific, and technical activities for others. These activities require a high degree of expertise and training. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.00.

• Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services

The Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services sector comprises establishments performing routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.04.

• Arts Entertainment and Recreation

The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector includes a wide range of establishments that operate facilities or provide services to meet varied cultural, entertainment, and recreational interests of their patrons. This category has a Location Quotient of 2.53.

• Other Services

This category collects all of the private sector service jobs that do not fit into other categories. This category has a Location Quotient of 1.12.

D. Labor Force Analysis

This section examines four factors related to the county labor force. These factors are labor force, unemployment, workforce participation, and education & training. Table 4 displays a variety of information related to the county labor force.

1. Labor Force

Overall, the labor force has grown from 3,545 in 1980 to 4,900 in 2000. That represents a growth of over 38 percent, which is more than double than the
state’s growth rate during this period. The labor force is defined simply as the number of persons, sixteen and over, employed or looking to be employment. Persons over sixteen who are students, homemakers, retired, institutionalized, or unable/unwilling to seek employment are not considered part of the labor force. In 1990, 3,308 of those were employed and that rose to 4,570 in 2008, which is an increase of 38 percent.

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labor Force</td>
<td>3,545</td>
<td>4,660</td>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>3,308</td>
<td>4,397</td>
<td>4,570</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>330</td>
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<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
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<td>5.6%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Participation Rate</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wisconsin DWD, 1990 to 2008 and NCWRPC.

2. Unemployment

Unemployment is defined as the difference between the total civilian labor force and total persons employed. Stay-at-home parents, retirees, or persons not searching for employment are not considered unemployed because they are not considered to be part of the “labor force”. In 1990 the county had 6.7 percent unemployment, compared to the state rate of 4.3 percent. By 2000, the county maintained a 6.7 percent unemployment rate, compared to the state rate of 4.7 percent. Over the last twenty years, Forest County has generally had higher unemployment rates than the state average.

3. Workforce Participation

Much of the growth in the county’s labor force has been due to the increase in the participation rates. In 1990, only about 40 percent of the population over 16 was in the labor force. By 2008, that rate increased to 49 percent. The national participation rate in 2008 was 51 percent, and the state rate was 54 percent. Workforce participation is a measure expressed in terms of a percentage of persons not actively seeking employment divided by the total working age population. These persons may not seek employment due to retirement, disability, choose to be a home care provider, or simply are not looking for work. In any event, these persons are not receiving unemployment benefits, nor are they seeking employment in any capacity.
4. Education & Training

Worker productivity has often been cited as one important reason for the strength of Wisconsin’s economy. Both education and training is critical to maintaining that productivity.

The level of educational attainment is an important indicator of the skills of the labor force. Formal education and job training reflect a community’s ability to provide a labor force for certain types of industry. As identified earlier in the plan, educational attainment in the county is very similar to the national average in terms of those with a high school diploma or better, and bachelor’s degrees or higher, although, the county does lag behind the state in both areas.

Training is another labor force indicator. Partnerships between local businesses, governments, and educational institutions are very useful in developing the Regional economy. Institutions such Nicolet Technical College, often direct their programs to the training needs of local workers and businesses. Training services for dislocated workers is provided at the Northern Advantage Job Center located in the City of Rhinelander. The job centers in Antigo and Niagara are other job centers that could provide assistance to Forest County Residents. The center is a one-stop resource for employers to meet their workforce needs and job seekers to get the career planning, job placement, and training services they need to obtain jobs. Organizations such as the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board are important to this process as well.

E. Incomes & Wages

There are two basic measures of income: median household income and per capita income. Median household income provides an indication of the economic ability of the typical family or household unit while per capita income provides a measure of relative earning power on a per person level. As identified in the Issues & Opportunities Chapter (tables 8 and 9) of this plan the Median Household income in 2000 was $32,023 and the Per Capita income was $16,451. Both Median Household Income and Per Capita Incomes have risen over the last decade, by 47 and 49 percent respectively. Both of these rates exceed the state growth rates for the same time period.

Wage data for all industries in 2008, from the Department of Workforce Development, indicates that employees in Forest County earn an average annual wage that is less than the overall state average. The average annual state wage is $39,169 and in Forest County it is $26,718. Employees earn less than the state average in all employment categories.
F. Economic Development Infrastructure

Overall, Forest County’s economic development infrastructure is concentrated in the City of Crandon. This infrastructure investment provides a wider range of opportunities for the prospective entrepreneur or expanding business, and greatly increases the county’s chances of developing and maintaining a stable employment base for its workforce in the future.

Forest County’s variety of infrastructure amenities includes:

- A serviced industrial park in the City of Crandon consisting of 18 acres with municipal water and sewer, gas and electric service, and rail service.
- A small number of existing commercial/industrial buildings available for immediate use.
- 150 miles of US/State highway, including US Highway 8 and State Highways 32, 52, 55, 101 and 139.
- Approximately 108 miles of County maintained highways.
- A Public-use airport suitable for business, charter, recreational and agricultural flying. The airport at Crandon is classified as Basic Utility-A Airport. The main runway is 3,100’ long as well as a secondary turf runway measuring 2,730’.
- The Canadian National Railroad connects Crandon, Cavour and Argonne in Forest County with the rest of the Wisconsin River valley region.

Industrial Parks are the critical economic development infrastructure in the county. The creation of industrial parks enables communities to compete with other communities to attract new businesses or to relocate existing businesses for expansions. An industrial park is a parcel of land that has been developed according to a plan that provides sites for potential industrial firms. The “park” is designed in such a way that it ensures compatibility among industrial operations and the existing activities of the area in which the park is located. The “park plan” provides for appropriate building setbacks, lot sizes, building to land ratios, architectural specifications, and landscaping required by the local codes and as necessitated by the nature of industrial activity. Currently the only places within Forest County that are planning for an Industrial Park is the City of Crandon, the Town of Laona and the Town of Wabeno.
G. Economic Development Programs

1. Local:

*Forest County Economic Development Partnership*
Forest County and several other area entities have created the Forest County Economic Development Partnership to promote economic development throughout the county. This group will promote overall economic development and work with new and existing businesses in Forest County.

2. Regional:

*North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation*
The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) manages a revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism and other manufacturing and service industries.

*Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC)*
The Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center provides operations assessments, technology training, and on-site assistance to help firms in southern Wisconsin modernize and streamline manufacturing processes.

*Northwoods NiiJii Enterprise Community*
This organization administers the Northwoods NiiJii Empowerment Zone, which consists of three Indian Reservations and three non-Indian developable sites. Forest County hosts one of the developable sites in the Town of Nashville bordering the Mole Lake Reservation. The organization has performed strategic planning to help balance economic and community development within these communities. The Enterprise Community has formed partnerships with 3 tribal governments and 3 non-Indian partners, local colleges, non-profits and other organizations at the local level to capitalize on existing resources and expertise thereby reducing administrative costs.

*Northwoods NiiJii Empowerment Zone*
This zone is a partnership that includes the Menominee, the Mole Lake Sokaogon, and the Lac du Flambeau Indian Tribes of Wisconsin as well as the non-Indian communities of Shawano County, the City of Shawano, the Town of Nashville in Forest County, Vilas County, and several Vilas County Townships. The NiiJii Empowerment Zone is dedicated to developing the economies of both tribal and neighboring non-Indian communities, recognizing that environmentally healthy and sustainable jobs and economies in one geographic area have the potential to increase economic activity in neighboring areas.
3. State:

*Rural Economic Development Program*
This program administrated by Wisconsin Department of Commerce provides grants and low interest loans for small business (less than 25 employees) start-ups or expansions in rural areas, such as Forest County. Funds may be used for "soft costs" only, such as planning, engineering, ad marketing assistance.

*Wisconsin Small Cities Program*
The Wisconsin Department of Commerce provides federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to eligible municipalities for approved housing and/or public facility improvements and for economic development projects. Economic Development grants provide loans to businesses for such things as: acquisition of real estate, buildings, or equipment; construction, expansion or remodeling; and working capital for inventory and direct labor.

*University of Wisconsin Extension Office*
The Center for Community Economic Development, University of Wisconsin Extension, creates, applies and transfers multidisciplinary knowledge to help people understand community change and identify opportunities.

*The Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC)*
This non-profit organization is located at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater and specializes in new product and invention assessments and market expansion opportunities for innovative manufacturers, technology businesses, and independent inventors.

*Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)*
The UW-SBDC is partially funded by the Small Business Administration and provides a variety of programs and training seminars to assist in the creation of small business in Wisconsin.

*Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)*
This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, provides immediate assistance and funding for the cost of transportation improvements necessary for major economic development projects.

*Other State Programs*
Technology Development grants and loans; Customized Labor Training grants and loans; and Major Economic Development Project grants and loans.
4. Federal:

*Economic Development Administration (EDA)*
EDA offers a public works grant program. These are administered through local units of government for the benefit of the local economy and, indirectly, private enterprise.

*U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA – RD)*
The USDA Rural Development program is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America. Financial programs include support for such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. USDA-RD promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools. The program also offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services.

*Small Business Administration (SBA)*
SBA provides business and industrial loan programs that will make or guarantee up to 90% of the principal and interest on loans to companies, individuals, or government entities for financing in rural areas. Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation acts as an agent for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that provide financing for fixed asset loans and for working capital.
6.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

This section identifies the goals, objectives and policies of the county as related to economic development.

Goals:

1. Maintain, diversify and expand the economy in the county, while maintaining the rural character of the county.
2. Preserve and enhance the quality of life by promoting the compatibility with economic development.
3. Encourage the coordination of economic development efforts with the city, tribal government and towns, as well as other organizations.
4. Develop and Maintain a Countywide Economic Development Point of Contact.
5. Create new Industries to Diversify the Economy.
6. Explore the use of renewable resources, especially wood biomass.

Objectives:

1. Promote the retention and expansion of the current economic base.
2. Encourage the creation of new businesses.
3. Promote the relocation of compatible businesses to the county.
4. Work with area schools and technical college to develop and maintain a well-trained workforce.
5. Maintain and enhance public facilities and services.
6. Pursue increased funding from both public and private sources.
7. Encourage the wood mills and wood product manufacturers to explore Renewable energy opportunities with wood waste.
8. Explore expansion of recreational opportunities in the county in context of the natural resource assets of the county.
9. Research and promote development of biomass and other renewable energies to benefit the timber industry which has potential of being a major fuel supplier.

Policies:

1. Continue relationship with Wisconsin Small Business Development Center for assistance with starting or growing a business.

2. Encourage involvement in the Northwoods Inventors & Entrepreneurs Club.

3. Evaluate, maintain and enhance infrastructure as necessary to facilitate economic growth, such as an industrial park.

4. Determine current employment characteristics and identify existing and future employment needs.

5. Encourage educational institutions to develop training programs needed by the area’s businesses to meet identified needs.

6. Support and work with local school officials on expanding the school to work program.

7. Direct industrial development to areas with the infrastructure and services to support the development.

8. Plan for an adequate supply of land for commercial and industrial needs.

9. Promote telecommunications infrastructure and other technology related to development and expansion.

10. Promote the use of North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation revolving loan funds to assist local economic development efforts.


12. Pursue Wisconsin Department of Commerce and other state sources.

13. Work with state, federal and local governments to locate a destination MRA in the County.
14. Preserve rail service and encourage better management of Forest Service property.

15. Promote development and establishment of biomass fuel plant, biomass electric generation plant, wind generation facility, or solar generation facility to become more self-sufficient on energy production and promote the potential fuel sources in our area.
Chapter 7: Intergovernmental Cooperation
CHAPTER 7:
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

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C. Intergovernmental Issues

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B. Potential areas of Cooperation  
C. Existing & Potential Intergovernmental Conflicts  
D. Planning Efforts in Surrounding Counties  
E. Intergovernmental Cooperation Tool

7.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies.............................................Page 11
7.1 Background

This is the seventh of nine chapters that comprise the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. This chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals maps and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent communities, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services.

The chapter shall analyze the relationship of the County with area school districts and adjacent local units of government, the state and other governmental agencies. In addition, this element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the County and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation also establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, one relates directly to intergovernmental cooperation:

1) Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.

This Comprehensive Plan provides overall recommendations for relationships with local and overlapping jurisdictions to achieve visions for future growth, avoid inefficient or conflicting development patterns, and promote intergovernmental agreements.

A. Previous Studies


This updates a 1981 Regional Development Plan for the North Central Wisconsin Region, which includes Forest County. It addresses several issues having to do with intergovernmental cooperation. Consistency is perhaps the most pressing of these issues because of its central role in the 1999 revision of the Wisconsin comprehensive planning statutes that have inspired the creation of this and many other comprehensive plans since then.

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) is only advisory and seeks to provide a backdrop for local planning efforts, informing local governing bodies about the context for their planning. Although at this time the need for consistency between plans of governmental bodies at various levels is not yet entirely clear, the degree to which planning efforts in various jurisdictions can be coordinated makes subsequent problems of inconsistency less likely. The RCP also looks at annexation, extra-territorial review and zoning, cooperative agreements and revenue sharing, and other methods that local governments can use to address
common issues. Not all conflicts between local governments can be settled through the use of these methods, but by looking at problems that transcend local boundaries in a regional context, solutions are more likely to be discovered.

2. **Kettl Commission**

One of the most essential and basic forms of inter-governmental cooperation in Wisconsin is the shared revenue program. A significant portion of the final report of the Wisconsin Blue-Ribbon Commission on State-Local Partnerships for the 21st Century (Kettl Commission) is devoted to the shared revenue program. Although the reforms proposed in the report have not been enacted, with the continuing pressure on the State budget they can provide valuable insight into how inter-governmental cooperation can provide a basis for cost savings in the future.

The report recounts the origins of the shared revenue program when the State began to pay local governments for property tax income lost by the removal of utility property from the tax rolls. The program was broadened when the State income tax was enacted in 1911. At that time ninety percent of the money was returned to the jurisdiction where it was collected. In 1972 a formula based on needs measured by revenue, property value and population was introduced. These formulas established equalization of revenues as an important goal of the program.

One of the flaws of the program, as presently constituted, that the report points to is that under the current formula a municipality increases its shared revenue funding by increasing its revenues and spending. “Higher expenditures...produce a higher shared revenue payment. Not only does this create an incentive to increase municipal spending to receive higher state shared revenue, it distorts municipal strategy.” The report proposes a way that the system might be improved, by removing this perverse incentive to increase spending, and still maintain the commitment to equalization among communities that is such an important part of the program’s history. At the same time it would attempt to increase accountability and improve performance as well as promoting economic development by rewarding growth. To do this the report advocates greater collaboration among neighboring jurisdictions.

“Too many communities unnecessarily duplicate public services... (we should) create strong incentives for municipalities to work together to identify those services where significant savings are possible...whoever can do the job best ought to do the job... (through) a performance-driven mechanism for purchasing specific services instead of providing unspecified support”.

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Intergovernmental Cooperation - 2 - Forest County Comprehensive Plan
In providing a basic level of service, what the report calls Badger Basics, a number of alternatives are explored, but the common thread is a “focus on funding services instead of spending...eliminate the incentive...to spend more money to receive more state aid.” To replace the per capita component of the current program, which in the 2000-2001 fiscal year amounted to $142 million, the report advocates what it calls area-wide growth sharing. These would be geographic areas with significant economic common interests; “small enough to encourage collaboration among the governments within them...(and) on a large enough scale to encompass substantial economic activity and to prevent large financial disparities among the regions.” It goes on to suggest that in constructing these areas they should be based on existing geographic and economic relationships: they should conform to actual functional units. “The boundaries ought to be drawn to capture service-delivery areas and to encourage the interactions with which local governments are used to dealing.” The report suggests funding such a program through a .25 percent of sales tax revenues designated to it. In the current climate such a development seems unlikely, but that does not diminish what the report says about how cooperation between jurisdictions can potentially improve services while lowering costs.

In 2002 Governor McCallum appointed the Wisconsin Task Force on State and Local Government (Sheehy Commission) to revisit issues examined by the Kettl Commission, especially the shared revenue program. The final report of the Commission looks at six issues and makes a number of major recommendations for reform that will make the program more cost effective. Much of this report, as with the Kettl report, is directed at how State law should be reformed. These concerns are well beyond the purview of the Forest County Comprehensive Plan, but there is valuable guidance to be gleaned from the work of both the Kettl and Sheedy Commissions that can be applied by local governments to providing services, even in the absence of reforms at the State level.

The first of the major recommendations made by the Sheedy Commission is to authorize regional tax base growth sharing, a concept introduced by the Kettl Commission. Such a policy would “strongly promote these agreements, especially in troubled economic times like these or in troubled regions and counties be they urban or rural.” These areas should be drawn to “reflect that Wisconsin’s economic strength begins in the communities and regions, and that regions compete globally...Growth sharing also can be tied to support for regional services and infrastructure and therefore encourage service sharing.” Major recommendations deal with protecting service equity, penalizing inefficiency, and providing incentives in the shared revenue program for jurisdictions that enter into shared service agreements. Incentives for this kind of cost savings that are made a part of the shared revenue program would make it much easier for local jurisdictions to enter into this kind of agreement, but it is not necessary to wait for the State before these efficiencies are realized.
Local governments can enter into inter-governmental agreements to provide shared services now. Major recommendation six provides something of a roadmap for how these agreements should be designed. 

“Local governments should create functional service delivery lines without regard to their political boundaries...Cost-saving opportunities may exist in providing and paying for services or facilities, including schools, in developing areas within one or adjacent jurisdictions. Laws authorizing fees against property owners and/or developers should be expanded to more easily allow for the recovery of direct costs to affected properties, with emphasis on cost management, inter-jurisdictional cooperation and fairness.”

It is crucial to the success of these agreements that they be based on carefully drawn areas. This is especially true for the proposed tax base growth sharing areas. It is necessary to “create functional service lines that support integrated decisions and systems approaches... jurisdictional lines and service delivery systems that make sense in today’s world.” Greater integration within regions that share common economic interests is the fundamental building-block of the growth sharing concept. But just as important is the idea of performance-based assessment of possible cooperative agreements: “a best practices function...(that) evaluates examples of service delivery based on: customer service, costs, efficiency, effectiveness and other factors such as rural-urban differences.” The quality of service delivery must be the primary criteria for any inter-governmental agreement. Just as jurisdictional boundaries should not pose an obstacle to efficient service delivery, an inter-governmental agreement is not an end in itself. The determining factor should be how to provide the highest quality services at the lowest possible cost.

One way to ensure this happens is by making sure that those who are served by such agreements, and those who pay for them be represented in their implementation. “By local decision, communities should share the costs of museums, recreational facilities, airports, zoos, etc. that are presently paid for by central cities but used by citizens regionally. Communities that share the cost of these facilities should have a voice in their construction and management.” Each inter-governmental agreement is different and must take into consideration all the ways in which each community is unique, but these reports do offer insight into how such agreements might be designed. The focus of these reports is, however, reform at the State level that would restructure the shared revenue program to provide incentives for this kind of cooperative agreement.
As mentioned earlier it is not the task of this Plan to focus on what State policy should be, but inter-governmental cooperation and shared service delivery is equally in the interests of local governments and of the state generally. Where structural incentives to foster cooperative agreements would be helpful in facilitating this approach there is ample justification for local governments to enter into such arrangements, even in the absence of incentives.

3. A Roadmap for Government Transformation

Early this year, the Local Government Institute published a study that examined the relationship between local units of government, the services they provide, and sources of funding those services. This effort involved a variety of stakeholders including: League of Wisconsin Municipalities, Wisconsin Counties Association, Wisconsin Towns Association, and Wisconsin Alliance of Cities. Some of the recommendations of that effort were the creation of a Legislative Council Committee on Regional Collaboration, create a broader mechanism for communities to overcome capital cost barriers, facilitate intergovernmental collaboration councils, seek legislative support and funding for financial incentives to negotiate boundary agreements, and develop linkages between regional economic development entities and collaboration councils.

B. Benefits & Trends

There are many reasons intergovernmental cooperation makes sense. Some examples include:

- Trust: Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions. As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another’s needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

- Cost Savings: Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly.

- Consistency: Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.
• Address Regional Issues: Communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues, which are regional in nature.

The major beneficiary of intergovernmental cooperation is the local resident. They may not understand, or even care about, the details of a particular intergovernmental issue, but residents can appreciate their benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

A variety of factors, some long-standing and others more recent have brought the issue of governmental cooperation to the forefront. Some of these factors include:

• Local governments financial situation;
• Opportunity to reduce costs by working together;
• Elimination of duplication of services;
• Population settlement patterns and population mobility; and
• Economic and environmental interdependence.

In addition, as more jurisdictions create comprehensive plans and share them with surrounding communities, new opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation will be identified.

C. Intergovernmental Issues

1. Shared Services

Forest County presents opportunities for local governments sharing services. Whether this involves one Town contracting with another for fire or EMS service, or the County agreeing to work with an adjacent County to solve a common problem, the goal is to maximize the benefit from the expenditure of public dollars. The economies of scale that result from a single entity providing service to a number of jurisdictions can benefit all by reducing cost and at the same time improving the quality of services received. Rural Fire Control is a good example of how services are being provided to a number of jurisdictions to improve service and reduce costs to all.

2. Overlapping Jurisdiction

Corporate boundaries of towns and counties often do not coincide with the boundaries of other functional units set-up by service-providing agencies, most notably school districts. This overlapping of service boundaries can often
cause problems and be an obstacle to providing services in the most cost-effective manner.

School districts within the county offer a particularly clear illustration of how functional boundaries do not always coincide with established units of government. In Forest County there are three primary school districts, but some other districts do reach into the county from surrounding counties.

In planning for intergovernmental cooperation it is important to remember that jurisdictional boundaries can present an obstacle to efficient service delivery. There can also be inconsistency between service delivery districts and other entities. All of these overlapping jurisdictions must be taken into consideration when considering how best to effectuate intergovernmental agreements and how best to deliver services to citizens.

3. Plan Consistency

Changes made to the zoning, land division, and official mapping ordinance after January 1, 2010 need to be consistent with the plan. An attempt should be made to make policies between adjoining jurisdictions consistent with one another, to the greatest degree possible. The consistency requirement in the comprehensive planning statutes deals with the need for land use decisions to be consistent with the plan.

Inconsistency between Town and County plans would put those charged with making land use decisions in the difficult position of choosing between competing visions for the proper policy course. Although the ultimate responsibility for defining the extent to which local plans must be consistent will fall to the courts, prudence would demand an attempt to resolve conflict between plans, especially where more than one level of government has a say in a single land use decision. An obvious example is rezoning, where the Town has the ability to reject a decision made by the County. If the Town and the County plans are significantly different in terms of the vision for land use that they express it will be hard for decision makers to be consistent with each other.
7.2 Overview of Current & Potential Efforts

A. Current Levels of Cooperation

This section looks at the existing inter-governmental cooperation agreements in effect in Forest County.

1. Surrounding Towns and Counties

There are numerous agreements in place related to ambulance and fire protection throughout the county as well as with adjoining counties. There are also agreements in place for emergency responses, such as communication interoperability and search and rescue.

The County maintains Shoreland Zoning throughout the entire county, except within tribal lands. Four towns have adopted County General Zoning, which means these towns have zoning throughout their entire township, while the others have only Shoreland zoning. The Towns of Lincoln and Nashville have established their own town zoning.

Often intergovernmental cooperation does not necessarily take the form of written agreements or contracts. Often it is more about informal arrangements and practices.

Forest County has a number of trails in cooperation with the towns, city, tribes, as well as state and federal agencies. Snowmobile trails, cross-country ski trails, horse trails, off-road motorcycle and ATV trails, and hiking trails transect the county. Trails also increase the opportunity to expand the county’s appeal as a visitor destination. The predominance of older persons in the population and their need for exercise and non-automobile transportation options also supports the need for trails. The local Chamber of Commerce promotes the county’s trail networks. The goal of such an approach is the development of a plan for on-road and off-road bike and hiking/running trails which connect existing cultural, economic, and natural resources throughout Forest County.

The effort to create a countywide trail system and link it to other resources within and outside of the county will necessarily involve cooperation between the County and City as well as the Towns, surrounding Counties (including into Michigan), and various government agencies. Such a unified trail system would be a great asset to the county, and the process to achieve it may represent a model that could be applied to other problems and projects.
2. School Districts

There are three primary school districts in Forest County; these are Crandon, Laona, and Wabeno. The Goodman – Armstrong and Three Lakes districts also reach into the county.

Schools are a crucial factor attracting families to the community and are a major factor in creating a competitive workforce. These factors require a high level of cooperation between local governments and the school districts that serve them. The location of a school can have a large impact on land use and development patterns. In rural communities, schools are often the focus of community and provide many recreational facilities for residents.

3. Regional Efforts

a. Grow North

Grow North Regional Economic Development Corporation was created in 2004 to foster cooperation among economic development partners and foster economic growth efforts in Forest, Forest, Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas counties recognizing the value of collaborative efforts to grow and diversify the north woods economy.

Grow North Regional Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to assist the counties and communities throughout our region in their efforts to recruit and retain businesses, stimulate new job creation and to foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurial growth and new company formations. Grow North’s partners include private-sector businesses, regional service providers, educational institutions, local economic development organizations and others who are interested in supporting our mission. Members recognize the importance and value of collaboration to ensure that the Grow North region remains competitive in the global economy.

The Grow North vision is a vibrant, unified Northern Wisconsin regional economy that retains and attracts thriving businesses and a high-quality workforce, fosters entrepreneurial activity, and inspires continuous improvement in the region’s quality of life. Recently Grow North has focused on how by emphasizing the region’s natural resources and improving the quality of educational among the workforce the Grow North area can become more integrated into the New Economy.
b. Forest County Economic Development Partnership

This is a newly created non-profit corporation with the goal of promoting business development throughout the county. Several organizations have been involved in the establishment and funding of this organization, including Forest County, Mole Lake (Sokaogon Chippewa), Forest County Potawatomi, City of Crandon, Forest County Chamber of Commerce, Wabeno Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Forest County Tourism.

c. County/Tribal Relations

Over the past few years there has been a growing relationship between the county and the tribal communities of the Mole Lake (Sokaogon Chippewa) and Forest County Potawatomi. Several initiatives have been discussed and some have developed in recent years. Additional opportunities are possible in the future.

B. Potential areas of Cooperation

This section looks at the areas where there is the potential for additional cooperation. There are a number of opportunities for cross-jurisdictional service delivery arrangements in the county. One area where such arrangements can be successful is road maintenance and snowplowing. By making agreements to share the expense of equipment or by contracting out this kind of work substantial cost savings are possible for Towns.

As mentioned above, shared services can increase efficiency and reduce cost. These arrangements already exist between many Towns in relation to fire and EMS service. Applying these same considerations to such basic Town services as snowplowing and road maintenance could yield considerable savings.

Intergovernmental agreements and cooperative practices will be pursued to facilitate a timely flow of information for land use approvals from the property owner, the town and on to the county and state.

C. Existing / Potential Intergovernmental Conflicts

No potential intergovernmental conflicts were identified in this process. The process for resolving some of these conflicts will in part be achieved by meeting with the surrounding towns when significant issues of mutual concern arise, including across the state border to Michigan.
D. Planning Efforts in Surrounding Counties

Six Wisconsin counties surround Forest County. Five of them have completed comprehensive plans and one is still in process.

Florence, Langlade, Marinette, Oconto, and Vilas Counties have all recently completed comprehensive plans. Oneida County is working to complete a comprehensive plan based on all twenty of its town plans. That effort is expected to be completed sometime in 2011.

E. Intergovernmental Cooperation Tool

The primary tool used for intergovernmental cooperation is the shared service agreement. Wisconsin Statute s.66.0301, formerly 66.30, entitled "Intergovernmental Cooperation"; does enable local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Typically, intergovernmental cooperation and coordination refers to the management and delivery of public services and facilities. It is also dependent upon a defined geographic area within which cooperation and coordination may be feasible.

Intergovernmental agreements prepared using this statute, are the most common form of agreement and have been used by communities for years, often in the context of sharing public services such as police, fire, rescue, or zoning. This type of agreement can also be used to provide for revenue sharing, determine future land use with in a subject area, and to set temporary municipal boundaries. However, the statute does not require planning as a component of any agreement and boundary changes have to be accomplished through the normal annexation process. Shared service agreements are utilized to allow this type of cooperation.

7.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goals:

1. Encourage coordination and cooperation among all units of government.

2. Coordinate activities across jurisdictional boundaries to improve the quality and efficiency of services.

3. Encourage countywide and regional planning efforts to address issues that will affect the future of Forest County.
Objectives:

1. Promote communication with other units of government, including adjoining towns, the county, the region, the state, and federal government.

2. Work together with other units of government, and others, to provide services in a more cost-effective manner.

3. Encourage the sharing of information between departments, local governments, and citizens.

4. Encourage regularly scheduled meetings and on-going communications between County departments, local governments, state agencies, and surrounding governments.

5. Engage in and support processes to resolve conflicts between the plans of governments with overlapping jurisdictions.

Policies:

1. Pursue dialogue with and between the Towns, City, and Tribes in the county to seek areas of cooperation.

2. At least annually, meet with adjoining units of government to discuss issues of mutual concern.

3. Periodically review existing shared service agreements, and explore additional agreements.

4. Involve all school districts that serve the county in the planning process, to assist them with facility planning and site selection.

5. Encourage towns to explore joint service agreements with neighboring towns and municipalities where consolidating and coordinating services will result in better services and/or cost savings.

6. Encourage coordination with surrounding counties, regional, state and federal agencies to address issues that cross-jurisdictional boundaries or involve the larger region.

7. Encourage a change to the way federal lands contribute to the tax base.
Chapter 8: Land Use
CHAPTER 8:
LAND USE

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8.1 Background

This is the eighth of nine chapters that comprise the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. This chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a compilation of goals, objectives, maps, and recommendations to guide the future development of the County. There are 14 state planning goals contained in the Comprehensive Planning Legislation. All of these goals can be related to land-use planning, with three being directly related.

These 3 land-use planning goals are:

1) Encouragement of land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.

2) Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities

3) Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.

The Land Use Element brings together all of the planning elements. The County Comprehensive Plan will provide a general framework for planning throughout the County. The chapter is comprised of three basic sections: these are background; inventory & trends; and goals, objectives & policies.

A. Previous Planning Efforts

It is important to review prior planning efforts related to land use. Listed here first are county level plans, followed by local plans, and regional efforts.

1. County Plans

There are a variety of other specialized plans that relate to some degree to land use. These plans include:

Forest County Land & Water Conservation Plan: This plan is currently being updated. The primary intent of this plan is to identify strategies to protect the quality and quantity of the county’s soil and water resources.

Forest County Forest Plan: This plan was developed to manage, conserve and protect the natural resources within the county forest on a sustainable basis for present and future generations. The Plan contains information about forest resource planning, outdoor recreation planning, silvicultural practices, aesthetic management zones, trails and access control, biological communities, and wildlife species that exist within the county forest. Contact the Forest County Forestry Department for more information.
Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan: This plan’s primary purpose is to identify existing recreational facilities and identify needed facilities for a five-year period. A variety of information is included in that plan, such as trail information, park inventory and future needs.

Forest County All Hazards Mitigation Plan: This plan’s primary purpose is to identify how to prevent injury and property damage from natural and man-made hazards.

Forest County Farmland Preservation Plan: This plan identifies all areas in the county that are zoned exclusive agriculture. That designation allows for active farming operations to apply for state tax credits. This plan is out of date and will be updated in the next few years.

2. Local Plans

A variety of local levels plans have been adopted as part of the multi-jurisdictional planning effort. To date, the City of Crandon and the Towns of Alvin, Armstrong Creek, Argonne, Blackwell, Freedom, Hiles, Lincoln, Nashville, and Wabeno have adopted locally developed local plans. The Town of Laona is still in the final stages of adoption. Four Towns did not complete a plan, these are: Caswell, Crandon, Popple River, and Ross.

The two tribal communities are also nearing completion of their plans.

3. Regional Plans

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission adopted a Regional Comprehensive Plan in 2003. "A Framework for the Future: 2000 - 2020" recommended a pattern for various uses of land upon which local government and the private sector could develop and coordinate their plans and activities. This plan provides a general framework for local planning efforts.

The Regional Comprehensive Plan identified the following overall goals for land use:

1) Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

2) Encouragement of land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.
3) Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

4) Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

5) Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.

The plan identifies a generalized future land use pattern using some broad land use categories, including: existing developed areas, urban growth areas, rural mixed-use areas, forest areas and agricultural areas. Existing developed areas include higher density areas in the City of Crandon and the “village” areas of Laona and Wabeno, where existing water and sewer infrastructure and service capacity are available.

B. Land Use Planning Tools

1. Zoning Regulations

There are two basic types of zoning, general and shoreland.

General Zoning has been a tool used by units of government since the 1920’s in Wisconsin. Zoning provides a reasonable protection of property rights of landowners by minimizing incompatible uses. Generally, zoning identifies a variety of broad districts that identifies the primary allowable or permitted uses, as well as a list of permitted uses with some conditions, called conditional uses. Often a district will list non-permitted uses. These districts are displayed on an official zoning map. Only four of the fourteen towns utilize general county zoning. These are Argonne, Crandon, Hiles, and Wabeno.

Shoreland Zoning is mandated by state law and is administered at the county level. The intent of shoreland zoning is to control development near waterways, in the most sensitive environmental areas. The area defined by state law is the area within 1000 feet of a lake or pond and 300 feet of a stream or river and all floodplains. The county has jurisdiction throughout all of the towns for shoreland zoning, regardless if they have county zoning, local town zoning or no zoning, therefore all fourteen towns fall under county shoreland zoning ordinance. Shoreland zoning does not apply to incorporated areas. All unincorporated areas fall under Shoreland zoning.

2. Subdivision Regulations

The purpose of a land division or subdivision ordinance is to regulate and control the division of land to: Further the orderly layout and use of land; prevent the overcrowding of land; Lesson the congestion on streets and
highways; and Facilitate adequate provision for water, sewage and other public improvements. A subdivision ordinance includes technical requirements, design standards for plats and certified survey maps, and required improvements (i.e. stormwater detention, public and private sewage, land dedication).

The Forest County Subdivision Ordinance outlines procedures for land division, technical requirements, design standards for plats and certified survey maps, and outlines required improvements (i.e. stormwater detention, public and private sewage, land dedication). Local units of government may also elect to have a separate land division ordinance if it is more restrictive than the county ordinance.

C. Land Use Programs

The principle land use programs include the County Zoning and Land Division ordinances. Two other related programs that may impact land use within the Town are listed below:

1. Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Program:

In October of 1999, the Governor signed into law Wisconsin Act 9, the Budget Bill, containing substantial revisions of statutes governing comprehensive planning. The law has been revised by the signing of two additional bills into law. The first is AB 872, containing “technical revisions” which was signed May 10, 2000. The second bill, signed April 13, 2004, is AB 608, which reduced the number of items that must be consistent with the plan to three, these are: official mapping, subdivision ordinances and zoning ordinances. Taken together these bills represent the most sweeping revision of the State’s planning enabling laws in half a century.

The law (§66.1001 WI Stats.) requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan by 2010. It lays out the nine required chapters of the plan and requires a public participation process. Jurisdictions that do not have a comprehensive plan in place by the deadline may not engage in actions that impact land-use.

The comprehensive planning law is significant in many ways. The law creates for the first time a definition of a comprehensive plan; it requires that almost all local units of government have a plan; it sets requirements for public participation; and requires that the plan be consistent with local implementations tools. Most important, is that it maintains that the process be locally driven so all local units of government decide their own future.
2. Farmland Preservation/Working Land Initiative:

The Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative was passed as a part of the state’s 2009—2011 biennial budget process. The goal of the Working Lands Initiative is to achieve preservation of areas significant for current and future agricultural uses through successful implementation of these components. The main components include:

- Expand and modernize the state’s existing farmland preservation program
- Establish agricultural enterprise areas (AEAs)
- Develop a purchase of agricultural conservation easement matching grant program (PACE)

The Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative will require that each county update its Farmland Preservation Plans over the next few years.

D. Land Use Planning Issues

1. Lack of Privately Owned Land

Over 82 percent of Forest County is non-taxable or not privately controlled. Most of this is federal land, but there is some state and tribal holdings as well. The lack of private land minimizes the opportunity for efficient development patterns that utilize existing infrastructure. Many planning goals are unattainable because of the distribution pattern of privately held properties. Development should be allowed in all areas where no government infrastructure is required.

2. Sustainable Forestry

Sustainable practices in forestry involve carefully planned techniques to prevent soil erosion, soil contamination, non-point water pollution, and productivity loss. The process of converting large contiguous areas of forest into smaller patches of forest is called forest fragmentation. Breaking up the continuous area with non-forest land-uses can inhibit the regeneration of the forest and may negatively impact both plant and animal species. Wildlife often needs a safe path from food to water; development may prevent animals from obtaining these necessities because of man made barriers such as highways, fences, structures, etc. Species may also become extinct if they are isolated within small “islands” of forest that lack the appropriate genetic diversity to ensure healthy procreation. Fragmentation may be temporary or permanent. Fire and timber harvest are examples of temporary fragmentation, while road building, agriculture, and urban development cause permanent fragmentation.
3. Community Revitalization

Cities and unincorporated communities provide identity to their surrounding areas. Where important parts of such communities are deteriorating, the rest of the area suffers. Problems involving abandoned and dilapidated buildings, loss of business and tax revenue, and inefficient use of valuable urban land gives rise to the need for appropriate land-use policies to address them. Planned redevelopment helps to re-establish a positive identity for these communities.

4. Location of Public Facilities and Infrastructure

The location and impacts of public service facilities are of great importance to land-use planning. Schools, airports, and highways tend to attract new development while utility corridors, power plants, and landfills generally try to avoid areas where development will occur. The topography, geography, population, land market, and economic conditions of the County often directly affect these location decisions.

5. Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Wetlands, rivers, streams, lakes, and other natural features are often in conflict with human development. Over-development along shorelines and in other riparian areas can cause pollution and destruction of an area’s natural beauty as well as detrimental impact on flora and fauna. This, in turn, may negatively impact recreational activities and subsequently the economy of the County. Failing septic systems can cause contamination of surface water bodies reducing recreational attractions and increasing health risks.

6. Support Development

The county, which has an abundance of public lands, encourages development on the available private lands within the county. The County supports development throughout the county, as identified in local plans, especially in the forest products and related clusters.
8.2 Inventory and Trends

The inventory and trends section identifies the County’s land uses. It also looks at the change over the last twenty years and makes projections into the future. The element relies on many things discussed in earlier elements, such as population and natural resources.

A. Overview of the Natural Landscape

Natural resources were reviewed in detail in the Natural Resource, Agriculture and Cultural Resources Chapter, however they are the foundation upon which all land use exists. Many of these natural features have an impact on where development can and cannot occur and need to be reviewed to create the future land use plan.

Environmentally sensitive areas include water, wetlands, and floodplains. These are areas that often fall under the county shoreland regulations. The county has an abundance of water, including the Wolf River, numerous lakes, as well as many streams. However, as waterfront development continues additional pressure is placed on the existing water bodies and the surrounding natural communities. Steep slopes are another natural feature that should be considered in the development of a future land use plan, since slopes are extremely vulnerable to erosion, are difficult to stabilize once disturbed by construction, and can reduce the aesthetics of an area. In addition to erosion, many rare habitat communities and species are lost to construction on steep slopes. There are relatively few areas of steep slopes in the county.

In terms of land area the county covers nearly 669,000 acres. The City of Crandon is the only incorporated community in the county with about 4,000 acres. The Town of Hiles is the largest town with over 90,000 acres and the Town of Crandon is the smallest with less than 23,000 acres. See Table 8-1.

Woodlands covered approximately 564,100 acres of the county in 2006. By 2009, there were 608,945 acres of woodlands covering Forest County. There are 102,480 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 22,334 acres that are closed to public access. Under the Forest Crop Law (FCL) 6,941 acres are open to the public.
Table 1: Land Area, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Civil Division</th>
<th>Land Area in Acres</th>
<th>% of County Land Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town of Alvin</td>
<td>74,190</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Argonne</td>
<td>69,274</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Armstrong Creek</td>
<td>31,115</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Blackwell</td>
<td>42,455</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Caswell</td>
<td>30,646</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Crandon</td>
<td>22,887</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Freedom</td>
<td>23,085</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Hiles</td>
<td>90,156</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Laona</td>
<td>68,787</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Lincoln*</td>
<td>40,246</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Nashville*</td>
<td>46,274</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Popple River</td>
<td>32,037</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Ross</td>
<td>24,686</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Wabeno</td>
<td>69,267</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Crandon</td>
<td>3,946</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest County</td>
<td>669,298</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census & NCWRPC
* Town includes Tribal Lands

B. Generalized Existing Land Use

To identify and quantify existing land uses a two-step process was completed. The first was an air photo interpretation using 2008 air photos. Land uses were identified and categorized into several broad general land use classifications to create a map. The categories used are: Agriculture, Commercial, Industrial, Woodlands, Residential, Transportation, Open Lands, Outdoor Recreation, Government/Public/Institutional, and Water.

An Existing Land Use Map provides a “birds eye view” of existing development patterns in the county. Easily observed in the county are the vast woodlands, including wetlands. Residential development is concentrated around many of the larger lakes and scattered along town and county roads throughout the county. See Map 8-1: Generalized Existing Land Use.

The second step used the map and calculations were made with a geographic information system (GIS) to determine acreage calculations. Note that these are generalized and are not intended to be exact, but rather provide an overview of what the land is being used for now. The information is displayed in below in Table 2.
Table 2:
Existing Land Use, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Category</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>12,332</td>
<td>1.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental/Public/Institutional</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Lands</td>
<td>4,051</td>
<td>0.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Recreation</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>6,837</td>
<td>1.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>5,535</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodlands</td>
<td>615,672</td>
<td>92.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>22,705</td>
<td>3.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Acres*</td>
<td>669,231</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Air photo interpretation, Local Plans & NCWRPC GIS

Woodlands are currently the largest land use in the county. Over 90 percent of the land is used for forestry. The second largest land use is agriculture with about 2 percent, while residential uses make up just over 1 percent.

C. Demographics Affecting Land Use

Population, housing and employment are the three most critical demographic factors that influence land use patterns. In an effort to determine future land use needs, a series of projections were completed using 1980 and 2000 population, housing units and employment information. By continuing the trends of the last twenty years into the future, we determine the number of additional persons, housing units and jobs that will need a place somewhere in the county.

The population of the County has continued to grow over the last twenty years. In 2000, there were 10,024 people living in the County. Between 1980 and 2000, population grew by just under 11 percent. Over that same period, total housing units increased by over 23 percent, and employment increased by 60 percent.
1. Population

Two sets of population projections are displayed, one from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) and one from the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC).

The DOA projections indicate a 3 percent growth over the 30-year period from 2000 to 2030. NCWRPC’s projections are based on the percentage growth rate between 1980 to 2000 and projected into the future. That method indicates a higher growth rate of 11 percent. The projected population, based on DOA, for 2030 is 10,323, while the NCWRPC projection indicates a population of 11,678.

Table 3 displays the projected increase for population in five-year increments for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.

2. Housing

Over the last twenty years there have been significant changes in the number of housing units in the County. In 1980, there were 6,749 housing units and by 2000, there were 8,322 housing units in the county, an increase of over 23 percent.

Housing will continue to be needed throughout the county as the population continues to increase. As displayed in Table 3 there will be an additional 1,740 persons in the county by 2030. Based on projected population growth and the average persons per household of 2.39 we determined the total units needed in the county. An additional 730 housing units will be needed for the new residents alone. This does not include demand for seasonal housing, which currently accounts for about 45 percent of the housing stock.

Table 3 displays the projected increase for housing units in five-year increments for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.

3. Employment

Employment in the County is expected to continue to increase. In 2000, 2,924 jobs were located in the County. Using the 1990 to 2000 historic employment trend almost an additional 1,368 jobs will be created in the county, a 32 percent increase.

Table 3 displays the projected employment increases in five-year increments for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030. See Table 3.
D. Land Demand

As the County’s population grows there is demand for more housing and employment opportunities. The previous projections highlighted those needs. To translate those needs to land use we examine existing densities and project those into the future to determine land use demand.

Table 4 display the future land use demands in five-year increments for residential uses and employment uses for both commercial and industrial. Assuming existing density patterns, over 1,800 acres will be needed to meet future residential, commercial & industrial demands. Agricultural demand will remain stable over the period, so no additional land is projected.
E. Land Values

Overall county equalized land values have increased over 86 percent over the last nine years; however, not all types of land increased equally. Residential property values increased by 110 percent and commercial values increased by 90 percent, manufacturing by 95 percent, and agricultural values declined 43 percent. Meanwhile, undeveloped lands increased by over 69 percent. Agricultural (AG) Forest was not a category in 2000. See the Table 5.

Table 5: Equalized Land Values ($)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Property</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>196,697,900</td>
<td>413,095,600</td>
<td>110.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>6,599,000</td>
<td>12,567,900</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>375,500</td>
<td>721,300</td>
<td>92.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>4,395,100</td>
<td>2,501,500</td>
<td>-43.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undeveloped</td>
<td>4,113,500</td>
<td>6,961,100</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG Forest</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,556,100</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest</td>
<td>86,702,900</td>
<td>114,685,800</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>787,000</td>
<td>1,938,000</td>
<td>146.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Value:</td>
<td>$299,670,900</td>
<td>$558,027,300</td>
<td>86.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


F. Future Land Use

The future land use plan map represents the preferred long-term land uses in the county as developed by the local units of government. Although the map is advisory and does not have the authority of zoning, it is intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate and manage future development. The local maps were developed after reviewing the natural and built environments and after examining population, housing, employment and land demand trends, the next step is to develop a future land use plan map.

Developing the county plan was simple since it takes all of the future land use maps from the locally developed comprehensive plans and combines them together into one county future land use map. However, the towns of Caswell, Crandon, Popple River and Ross did not participate in the planning process, so those towns were dealt with differently. To do so, several generalized land use categories were established to identify future land uses in those towns. These are similar to the land use categories used in the other towns and the city.
These categories used are displayed below:

1. Land Use Categories

Much like the existing land use process several future land use categories were established. Nine categories are defined below:

**Residential**
Identifies areas recommended for residential development typically consisting of smaller lot sizes, often lakeshore development.

**Rural Residential**
Identifies areas that are recommended for less dense residential development, consisting of larger minimum lot sizes than the residential category and it also includes other scattered mixed uses.

**Commercial**
Identifies areas recommended for commercial development, as well as existing commercial establishments located throughout the county.

**Industrial**
Identifies areas recommended for industrial development, as well as existing industrial areas located throughout the county.

**Governmental/Public/Institutional**
Identifies existing or planned governmental/public/institutional facilities within the county, including recreational facilities.

**Agricultural**
Identifies areas to be preserved for the purpose of general crop farming or the raising of livestock, and other scattered mixed uses.

**Forestry**
Identifies areas of large woodlands within the county and other scattered mixed uses.

**Mixed Use**
These are areas with a variety of uses, such as a small community or village with retail, commercial, and residential uses in close proximity. Also includes larger tracts where land use is undesignated.

**Preservation & Open Space**
Contains sensitive environmental areas, such as floodplains, wetlands, open water, whose use is defined and administered by state statute.
**Transportation Corridors**
Identifies the existing road network along with the recommendations for improved and safe traffic movement in the county. This also includes rail corridors and airports.

Note that it is possible for multiple county zoning districts to be consistent within the generalized land use categories defined above. A variety of factors need to be considered in any rezoning decision.

2. Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use map is not the same as the Existing Land Use map. The Existing Land Use map categorizes land the way it is being used today, while the intent of the Future Land Use map is to identify general areas for future development. Often times there is some overlap, but the purpose of each map is very different. See each town for the official plan adopted by that community. In the case of those four towns that did not prepare a local plan, you would need to see the county for additional information.

The identification of desired future land use types through the map does not imply that an area is immediately appropriate for zoning or rezoning. Given service demands and a desire for controlled growth, careful consideration to the timing of zoning decisions is essential. In some places, it may be desirable to rezone land to reflect the planned land use designations as soon as possible. In other cases, it may be appropriate to wait to rezone the area until an actual development proposal is brought forward. An essential characteristic of any planning is that it be ongoing and flexible. Periodic updates to this comprehensive plan are needed to reflect current trends. See Map 8-2: Future Land Use.

The Future Land Use map developed reflects no major changes in land use over the next twenty years. Forestry will continue to be the major land use in the county because of the dominance of public land ownership, and scattered throughout the county will be a variety of other mixed uses.

G. Redevelopment Opportunities

The most efficient development utilizes existing public services and infrastructure; these areas are referred to as “smart growth” areas. The most efficient development utilizes existing public services and infrastructure. However land may not be available near these services or existing services and infrastructure might be at maximum capacity. Development should be allowed
where necessary or public services and infrastructure is not required throughout the county.

H. Adjoining Planning Efforts

Five of the six Wisconsin counties surrounding Forest County have an adopted comprehensive plan, these are: Florence, Langlade, Marinette, Oconto, and Vilas. Oneida County is in the final stages of developing a comprehensive plan.

8.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

The following section identifies the goals, objectives, and policies of the county related to land use.

Goals:

1. Encouragement of land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns.

2. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

3. Provide adequate infrastructure & public services, and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future demand for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses.

4. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

5. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.

Objectives:

1. Maintain orderly, planned growth which promotes the health, safety and general welfare of county residents and makes efficient use of land and efficient use of public infrastructure and services.

2. Assure that the pace of development does not exceed the capacity of utilities, roads, and community facilities and services.

3. Discourage new development that adversely affects the property value or livability of neighboring properties.
4. Conserve and revitalize older neighborhoods, commercial, and industrial areas.

5. All comprehensive plans should strive to be consistent with and seek to minimize conflicts with other levels of government, and implementation tools.

6. Promote new land development that is compatible with local government comprehensive plans and related plans.

Policies:

1. Guide the location, mix, and quality of private development to meet both private and public land use objectives.

2. Update land use regulations to better guide and manage the location, mix, quality, and impacts of development in the county.

3. The County will maintain the Comprehensive Plan, which will serve as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions.

4. The location of new development should be restricted from areas in the county known to be unsafe or unsuitable for development.

5. Manage public lands in a manner compatible with land use goals, objectives, policies, and plans.

6. The county may allow higher density and mixed development where it is compatible with existing development patterns.

7. Where appropriate, allow for varied mixed uses on larger parcels.

8. Encourage towns, tribes, and the city to develop and maintain local comprehensive plans.

9. All comprehensive plans should strive to maximize public input in their planning efforts.
Chapter 9: Implementation
CHAPTER 9:
IMPLEMENTATION

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9.1 Background

This is the final chapter of the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. This chapter outlines the plan adoption process, monitoring, amendment and update procedures, and overviews the primary plan implementation tools. This chapter concludes with the overall recommendations to implement this plan.

The County Board and its various committees, boards, and commissions, along with county staff, as well as landowners and developers, will use this Comprehensive Plan to guide the physical development of the County in the years to come.

9.2 Plan Adoption

The adoption process requires that the Plan Commission or for a county its designated committee review the Comprehensive Plan and passes a “resolution” (by a majority vote) to recommend the adoption of the plan to the County Board. That recommendation is forwarded to the County Board who must adopt the Comprehensive Plan by “ordinance”.

Oversight for the development of the plan was provided by the Intergovernmental Relations Committee. This committee will pass the resolution and then move the plan to the County Board for the public hearing and final adoption. Following the adoption the Zoning Committee will monitor the Comprehensive Plan.

Prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, a public hearing is required to be held to solicit public comment. That public hearing must be advertised with at least 30 days published notice. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions over the next 10 years. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the County’s land use policy related to growth and development.

9.3 Plan Monitoring

Members of the County Board, Zoning Committee, County staff, and other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be amended or addressed when updated. On an annual basis the Future Land Use Plan Map should be reviewed and amended if necessary to keep the map current. At a minimum, the entire plan should be formally reviewed at least every five years and, by law, updated at least every 10 years.
As part of the comprehensive planning process, a number of goals, objectives, and policies were developed. To measure progress towards meeting those, a variety of actions need to take place. Therefore, the task to measure plan progress is as simple as determining if any action was taken or not on the various goals, objectives, and policies listed. Any evaluation should involve first reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the policies should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate.

Various committees and departments would address many of these actions. It should be noted that many of the policies identified in the plan are taken from other county plans, such as the Outdoor Recreation Plan and the Land and Water Conservation Plan.

9.4 Plan Amendments

The plan may be amended at any time upon the recommendation of the Zoning Committee and approval from the County Board following the same statutory process described for initial plan adoption. Amendment procedures are the same regardless of how minor the proposed change. Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change and will typically consist of changes to the plan text or maps.

A list of general criteria to consider when reviewing proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan, including:

- The plan amendment corrects an error made in the original plan.
- The amendment is consistent with a town’s plan update and the goals, objectives, and policies of the Forest County Comprehensive Plan.
- There is a significant change in the area’s characteristics that would justify a plan amendment.

The Zoning Committee prior to the public hearing and adoption by the County Board must review proposed amendments. The public should be notified of proposed plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For significant changes, it may be desirable to solicit public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the public hearing.
9.5 Plan Updates

According to the State’s comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates will probably involve re-writing entire chapters of the plan document. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community’s goals and objectives, based upon an analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

It is important that the public be involved in the update process. To ensure that the public is engaged in plan amendments, the same procedure used for initial plan adoption must be followed. (See State Statute 66.1001). Upon Zoning Committee review and resolution to make recommended changes to the plan, the County Board shall call a public hearing to allow property owners and citizens time to review and comment on recommended plan changes. The public hearing shall be advertised with a 30-day Class I notice.

9.6 Implementation Tools

The most common implementation tools are the County’s official controls or regulatory codes, these are, the zoning ordinance and map, subdivision regulations, and official map. These regulatory tools are used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development. The State planning law requires that land use decisions must be consistent with a locally adopted comprehensive plan.

The three primary tools are reviewed below:

A. Zoning

As discussed previously in this plan, there are two basic types of zoning in force within the county. One is general county zoning that applies only in towns that have joined to manage development. The other basic zoning is Shoreland/Floodplain Zoning that applies to all towns in the county. This zoning controls lands adjacent to lakes, rivers, streams and floodplains.

General County Zoning:

Currently, four of the fourteen towns in the county are included in general county zoning. The County Zoning Ordinance is a detailed, locally adopted law
that is used to regulate and control how land is used and developed. The zoning ordinance contains rules for building setbacks, the density of development, the height and size of building and other structures, and the types of land uses that are allowed on each and every piece of land in the County. The zoning ordinance consists of a written text and a map. The general purpose of zoning is to protect the public health, safety and general welfare.

Zoning provides a reasonable protection of property rights of landowners by minimizing incompatible uses. Zoning identifies a variety of broad districts that identifies the primary allowable or permitted uses, as well as a list of permitted uses with some conditions, called conditional uses. Often a district will list non-permitted uses. These districts are displayed on an official zoning map. See the County Zoning Office for more information.

Hiles, Argonne, Crandon, and Wabeno are zoned completely through the County and have been so zoned as of August 1999. Alvin, Armstrong Creek, Blackwell, Caswell, Freedom, Laona, Popple River and Ross have been unzoned, except for areas where the shoreland ordinance is administered by the county. The Towns of Lincoln and Nashville administer their own zoning ordinance, except for the shoreland areas described above, where double jurisdiction exists with the county.

Shoreland Zoning:

Shoreland Zoning is mandated by state law and is administered at the county. The intent of shoreland zoning is to control development near waterways, in the most sensitive environmental areas. The area defined by state law is the area within 300 feet of a stream or river or to the landward side of the floodplain and 1000 feet of a lake, flowage, or pond. The county has jurisdiction throughout all of the towns for shoreland zoning, regardless if they have county zoning, local town zoning or no zoning, therefore all towns fall under county shoreland zoning ordinance.

B. Subdivision Regulations

The purpose of a land division or subdivision ordinance is to regulate and control the division of land to: Further the orderly layout and use of land; Prevent the overcrowding of land; Lesson the congestion on streets and highways; and facilitate adequate provision for water, sewage and other public improvements. A subdivision ordinance includes technical requirements, design standards for plats and certified survey maps, and required improvements (i.e. stormwater detention, public and private sewage, land dedication).
The County Subdivision Ordinance outlines procedures for land division, technical requirements, design standards for plats and certified survey maps, and outlines required improvements (i.e. stormwater detention, public and private sewage, land dedication). All towns are covered under this ordinance, except for those local units that have elected to have a separate land division ordinance that is more restrictive than the county ordinance.

C. Official Mapping

Counties have limited official mapping powers; cities have much greater powers. Counties may prepare plans for the future platting of lands, or for the future location of streets, highways, or parkways in the unincorporated areas of the county. In addition, counties may adopt highway-width maps showing the location and width of any existing streets or highways, which are planned to be expanded; however, the municipality affected must approve the map.

9.7 Consistency Among Plan Chapters

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Chapter describe how each of the required chapters will be integrated and made consistent with the other chapters of the plan. Since the County completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap occurs between the nine plan chapters. Where deemed appropriate, certain goals, objectives, and policies have been repeated or restated within multiple chapters of the plan.

This Comprehensive Plan also references previous and concurrent related planning efforts to ensure they are considered in the community’s planning and development decisions. Recommendations from other plans have been summarized and incorporated in this plan, as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination and consistency between plans.

In the future, as plan amendments occur, it is important that County staff and the plan commission conduct consistency reviews. These reviews will ensure that the plan is up-to-date. It is also critical that the plan and/or maps are changed that these changes are made they do not conflict with other sections of the plan or other maps.
9.8 **Recommended Actions**

This section outlines the recommendations to implement the goals, objectives, and policies that are contained in the comprehensive plan. These recommendations are:

1. The Intergovernmental Relations should pass a resolution recommending adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

2. The County Board should adopt the plan by ordinance and use it as a guide for decision-making.

3. The County should incorporate changes to its Zoning Ordinance and other implementation tools to establish consistency as necessary.

4. The Zoning Committee should become knowledgeable of the plan and use it to justify recommendations to the County Board on development issues.

5. The County’s staff should incorporate the goals, objectives and policies of the plan into annual work plans and budgets.

6. The County should encourage citizen, landowner, developer, state agency, and federal agency awareness of the plan. An initial step would be to have the document hosted on the County website.

7. The County should provide copies of the plan to all communities within the County, as well as state and federal agencies that have land holdings in the County.

8. The Zoning Committee should review the Future Land Use Map at least annually and make necessary amendment recommendations to the County Board.

9. The County should formally review the plan every five years and make any necessary amendments, and update the plan at least every ten years.
Attachment A:

Public Participation Plan
I. Background

The County recognizes the need to engage the public in the planning process. Therefore, this Public Participation Plan sets forth the techniques the County will use to provide an interactive dialogue opportunity between citizens, local decision makers, staff, and the NCWRPC.

The creation of the Public Participation Plan is a task required under Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Legislation (§66.1001(4)(a) Wis. Stats.) to foster input from the public.

II. Objectives

The following is a list of objectives for the Public Participation Plan:

- Provide for public involvement to strengthen the sense of community within Forest County.

- Inform all residents and landowners with an interest in Forest County of the importance of participating in creating the County Comprehensive Plan.

- Request input from residents and land owners to represent the broadest range of perspectives and interests in Forest County as possible.

- Provide the public with a variety of opportunities to share their input with the County Plan Committee and the County Board, so that it may be carefully considered and incorporated into the comprehensive planning process.

- Allow public access to all County Comprehensive Plan chapters and maps created throughout the planning process.
III. Techniques

The public participation plan for Forest County's comprehensive planning process will incorporate the following techniques:

1. All meetings for the comprehensive planning process will be posted by the County, will be open to the public, and will include time for public comment.

2. NCWRPC will create and maintain a web page on the Internet for the Forest County Comprehensive Plan. The chapters and maps created will be posted to this web page throughout the planning process.

3. Comprehensive plan meeting handouts will be maintained by County Planning & Zoning, and available for review by the public at the Forest County Courthouse.

4. NCWRPC will distribute a copy of the draft County Comprehensive Plan to all Forest County communities after the County Plan Committee adopts a resolution in favor of the draft County Comprehensive Plan.

5. After the County Plan Committee adopts a resolution in favor of the draft County Comprehensive Plan, it will be available at the Courthouse, the Crandon Public Library, the Edith Evans Community Library (Laona), the Wabeno Public Library, the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library (Eagle River), and on the Comprehensive Plan web page.

6. The County Plan Committee and County Staff will provide regular reports to the County Board.

7. An informational “open house” meeting will be held in the Spring of 2010.

8. The County Board will hold a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan after the County Plan Committee adopts a resolution recommending County Board adoption of the County Comprehensive Plan.
RESOLUTION NO.  -2009

Resolution offered by the  INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Forest County, Wisconsin, That

WHEREAS, that Forest County is required to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan as outlined in Wis. Stats. 66.1001(4)(a); and

WHEREAS, public participation is critical for the development of a sound plan; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for Forest County to approve a process to involve the public in the planning process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Forest County Board of Supervisors that Forest County does approve and authorize the Public Participation Plan as presented.
Attachment B:

Intergovernmental Committee Resolution
RESOLUTION # 2011-1

INTERGOVERNMENTAL (COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING) COMMITTEE
RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE
FOREST COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes, establishes the required procedure for a local government to adopt a comprehensive plan, and section 66.1001(2) identifies the required elements of a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Committee has the authority to recommend that the County Board of Supervisors adopt a "comprehensive plan" under section 66.1001(4)(b); and

WHEREAS, the County has prepared the attached County Comprehensive Plan document, containing all maps and other descriptive materials, to be the comprehensive plan for the County under section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Intergovernmental Committee of Forest County hereby recommends adoption of the attached Comprehensive Plan as the County’s comprehensive plan under section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk certifies a copy of the attached Comprehensive Plan to the County Board for official adoption; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Intergovernmental Committee hereby recommends that, following a public hearing, and revisions to the plan as needed, the County Board adopt an ordinance to constitute official approval of the Forest County Comprehensive Plan under section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.

    Adopted this 6th day of January, 2011.

Karl Tauer, Chairperson

Greg Weber
Bucky Dalley
Jimmy Landry, Jr.
Dleck Johnson
Attachment C:

County Board Ordinance
ORDINANCE NO. 01-2011 2

WHEREAS, section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes, establishes the procedure for a local government to adopt a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Committee has the authority to recommend that the County Board of Supervisors adopt a “comprehensive plan” under section 66.1001(4)(b); and

WHEREAS, the County has prepared the attached County Comprehensive Plan pursuant to section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.

WHEREAS, if the plan is adopted, there shall be no penalty for failure to adhere to the plan; and

WHEREAS, Forest County remains the authority to modify the plan, or to rescind the plan in its entirety, at any time.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED BY THE FOREST COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS as follows:

SECTION I. That the attached Comprehensive Plan prepared pursuant to section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes be adopted.

SECTION II. That this Ordinance shall take effect and be in full force and effect upon its adoption and publication pursuant to law.

Dated this 17th day of May, 2011.

Erhard Huettl
Forest County Board Chairman

ATTEST:

Ann Mihalko
Forest County Clerk
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