

DOUGLAS COUNTY FOREST ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

CHAPTER 6 Three Area Classification System

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CHAPTER 6

THREE AREA CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

6.0 THREE AREA CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Access Management Plan designates a mapped and classification system for managing motorized recreational access on the Douglas County Forest. The Forest was divided into three areas for management and planning purposes based on motorized-access objectives (see Appendix - L for a map). Forest resource management units, local descriptions, soil types, and landscape attributes were used to delineate the three areas. Some of the criteria used to identify these areas included past access management and type of use (motorized vs. non-motorized), intensity of use, soil types, associated riparian habitats, topography, long-term forest-management and transportation plans, sense of wilderness, and ecosystem characteristics. Management of all three areas is under the authority of Douglas County and all applicable County policies and ordinances apply. During the area identification process, the working group also acknowledged and incorporated access objectives and/or regulations of existing cooperative plans and projects.

6.1 High Motorized Area

This area consists of 65,971 acres of County forest land and special-use land. For purposes of the Access Management Plan, it area is categorized as a High Motorized Area and was identified by the working group as the block that can best provide and sustain the greatest opportunity for motorized uses on roads and trails. This classification does not authorize the use of motorized vehicles over the entire block. Rather, it is defined as the area on the Forest where motorized-vehicle access is most readily available. Permitted motorized uses are designated on a road-by-road basis; one permitted use for a road is exclusive of that road alone and not necessarily permitted on any other individual road. The distribution of this block across the southern, southeastern, central, and northeastern region of the Forest was identified by the working group as providing the greatest opportunity for users who seek this type of recreational area. Of the three classifications, this area offers the greatest opportunity for motorized recreational use on the Forest.

Stands of aspen (25 percent); jack pine (18 percent), and red pine (18 percent) are the most dominant in this block, followed by swamp hardwood types (6 percent), scrub oak (6 percent), swamp conifer types (5 percent), muskeg bogs (4 percent), tag alder (3 percent), and northern red oak (3 percent). The remaining 12 percent of this tract is composed primarily of fir-spruce, white birch, upland brush, lowland marsh, grass, northern hardwood, white pine, red maple, and open water types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity and occurs throughout the year. This block offers the most potential of any on the Forest for harvesting when the ground is not frozen. The primary management objective is to maintain stands of the aspen, jack pine, and red pine for timber production and enhance wildlife habitat through natural and forced maintenance. Stands of aspen and jack pine are managed naturally for age-class and structural diversity through regeneration harvests. Past management of jack pine has focused primarily on forced maintenance in the form of artificial plantings, while future management will focus more on natural regeneration. Traditional management of jack pine included much more forced conversions to red pine but today focuses more on natural maintenance. Artificial plantations and natural stands of red pine are managed aggressively for both

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fiber and sawlog production through selective harvests based on site occupancy levels. A secondary objective for this block is to maintain and perpetuate the scrub oak component in both pure and mixed stands to improve species diversity and enhance wildlife habitat. Other considerations when managing timber on this block are protecting water quality in the many ponds and lakes, preventing erosion on sand slopes, and promoting forest aesthetics.

This block contains 4 of the County's 10 State Natural Areas. The Blueberry Swamp State Natural Area (370 acres) located in the northeastern portion of the block, occupies a drainage divide. The eastern part flows to the Bois Brule River (water going to the Atlantic Ocean) and the western part flows to the Namekagon River (water going to the Gulf of Mexico). The core of the swamp holds mineral-rich waters and harbors a high conservation forest of black ash and Atlantic white-cedar. The swamp provides habitat for numerous rare plant and animal species, including a diverse array of orchids. The relative undisturbed core is an ideal ecological reference area, in large part because of its position as source water for the Namekagon River and Blueberry Creek, both of which provide exceptional water to the Bois Brule River. This site has been rated as one of the top hardwood swamps in northern Wisconsin.

The Flat Lake State Natural Area (105 acres) located in the central portion of the block, is a shallow, soft-water, seepage lake with fluctuating water levels and shoreline features. The bottom consists of muck and sand and sedges and rushes dominate the emergent vegetation. The submerged vegetation is lush and diverse. This lake is an excellent site for the study of diverse aquatic insect and plant populations.

The Goose Lake State Natural Area (80 acres), located in the southeastern portion of the block, is a soft-water, seepage lake with fluctuating water levels and shoreline features. Sedge and rushes are the most common plants and 20 acres of sedge meadow adjoin the lake. These lakes and wetlands are found in sandy outwash areas that were dominated by pine barrens in the pre-European period. There were regular fires along the shorelines and occasionally throughout the wetlands. Several species of concern are found in these shoreline communities. This lake is an excellent location for studying the ecological effects of fluctuating water levels.

The Buckley Creek Barrens State Natural Area (899 acres), located in the southwestern portion of the block, contains a slow, cold, soft-water creek that flows 4.5 miles to the St. Croix River from a spring pond. Most of this stream flows through swamp conifers, black spruce, tamarack, balsam fir, Atlantic white-cedar, and tag alder. The uplands to the east are high-conservation-value pine barrens that burned in a forest fire in 1977; the barrens have recovered since the fire. Dominant tree species are slow-growing jack pine and Hills oak. Species composition in the pine barrens indicates a diverse plant and animal community. The barrens have few invasive exotic plants.

The topography in this block ranges from virtually flat to sloping hills; primary landform patterns range from nearly level to rolling outwash plains. The secondary pattern is undulating outwash plains and moraines. Due to its location and regional distribution, this block intersects many soil associations. The primary associations of Grayling-Rubicon, Loxley-Seelyville, and Grayling-Menahga-Rubicon consist of excessively drained sand over sand outwash. These types contain mostly

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soils in outwash areas that comprise knolls, swells, hills, and ridges. The terrain also includes basins and drainages, many of which contain ponds, lakes, creeks, rivers, bogs, or swamps. A minor secondary soil association found throughout the extreme northeastern portion of this block is the Vilas-Keweenaw-Sultz types, which consists of excessively drained loamy sand over sand outwash or acidic loamy sand. Depressional areas such as drainageways and basins are common throughout the outwash plain. Other soil associations found in the northeastern portion and along the extreme southeastern boundary of the block include Loxley-Dawson, Mahtomedi-Menahga-Graycalm-Seelyeville-Loxley, and Sarwet-Keweenaw-Moodig-Lupton-Annalake-Pence-Vilas. All of these consist of well-drained to excessively well-drained sandy loam or loamy sand over loamy sand till, gravelly sand, or sand outwash along with very poorly drained, mucky organic soils.

The primary concern in managing access on this block is the potential for erosion on slopes and damage to native vegetation on unimproved roads and trails. Sandy soils are particularly prone to these risks. Most of the existing logging roads and trails in the block have been constructed in sandy soils and are in nearly flat areas, and can support sustained motorized use throughout the year. Roads and trails that are associated with slopes greater than 2 percent, though minimal, are highly susceptible to erosion. Roads that intersect streams, drainages and low areas present significant potential for sedimentation, soil and vegetation damage, and scarring of the landscape. Most of the secondary public road system that provides access to the area requires considerably less maintenance than roadways in other blocks. However, occasional maintenance is required during most months.

This block includes the Ounce, St. Croix, and Totogatic Rivers and the following Creeks: Arnold, Blueberry, Buckley, Casey, Lord, Lower Ox, Nebagamon, Smith, Snake, and Spring.

Seventy-six sections of this block have a threatened, rare, or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community as identified in the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory that was conducted in July 1999 by the Bureau of Endangered Resources.

This unit encounters considerable recreational use on a year-round basis. Primary uses include hunting large and small game, viewing wildlife, nature photography, cross-country skiing, hiking, gathering firewood, fishing, trapping, horseback riding, camping, and picking berries. The central portion of the block contains the North Country National Scenic Trail footpath and 10.3 miles of DCFD-maintained cross-country ski trails. The following funded snowmobile trails intersect portions of the block: 24, 3, 4, 41, 5, 541, 7, and 35 (Wild Rivers Trail). Segments of Trails 3, 41 and 35 also are funded summer ATV trails. The Lucius Woods, Gordon Dam, and Mooney Dam County Parks are within or near this unit. These parks offer designated camping areas and a variety of recreational opportunities, including numerous maintained facilities. Bass Lake, Long Lake, and Minnesuing County Parks and Park Creek Pond also are within or near this unit. These designated day-use sites have a limited number of maintained facilities but offer many opportunities for outdoor recreation. Canoeing and other water-related recreational uses are common on the scenic Totogatic River that intersects the extreme southeastern portion of the block.

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6.1.1 Conditions

- (1) This block is designated as a High Motorized Area for both HV and OHV use.
- (2) Both HV and OHV use is allowed on this block except where restricted.
- (3) All routes open to both HV and/or OHV use are open to motorized use as designated in type of use and time period.
- (4) All motorized uses are prohibited on closed roads and trails throughout the year or seasonally closed period.

6.1.2 Objectives

- (1) Identify open and closed routes and designate restricted motorized uses on closed routes.
- (2) Identify and close currently open roads not intended to be open by installing a sign, gate, berm, or other blockage device.
- (3) Develop the highest open-road density on the Forest for motorized HV and/or OHV use.
- (4) Ensure that most of the open roads that provide access remain open to HV and/or OHV motorized use.
- (5) Where applicable, use advanced standards and engineering specifications when constructing new HV and OHV open roads or improving existing routes.
- (6) Protect temporary roads for which motorized recreational access will be prohibited with an appropriately signed blockage device. Such roads may be rehabilitated and “put to bed” using various reclamation techniques, e.g., ripping, disking, barring, furrowing, and/or planting vegetation.
- (7) Examine existing dead-end and/or isolated road and trail networks for possible development and/or improvement of strategically located connectors open to motorized use, thus providing a greater opportunity for destination travel.
- (8) Distribute designated HV and/or OHV open roads as best possible across the block to disperse use patterns.
- (9) Continue cooperating with the North County Trail Association and National Park Service in developing and establishing of the North County National Scenic Trail.
- (10) Reduce individual or group preference by minimizing permitted motorized travel from private land into this block.
- (11) Identify and eliminate locations of unauthorized motorized travel from private land into this block and enforce continued violations.

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(12) Avoid all unnecessary route construction through the Blueberry Swamp State Natural Area. If necessary, branch access off an existing restricted access route and use minimal construction techniques.

(13) Avoid all new road construction and development within the Flat Lake and Goose Lake State Natural Areas except for emergency purposes.

(14) Protect the natural integrity and exceptional resources of the Buckley Creek Barrens State Natural Area by carefully analyzing planned management activities before developing additional access points.

6.1.3 Potential Projects

(1) Develop parking areas along public roadways at main points of restricted access into this block.

(2) Construct camping areas that can accommodate larger recreational vehicles and pull-behind, trailer-type vehicles where suitable along the public roadways and primary roads that access this block.

(3) Examine all State-funded summer ATV and winter ATV and snowmobile trail systems for possible expansion.

(4) Design and strategically locate large information signs along public roadways and main points of access that identify the block and consider incorporating maps and other pertinent information.

6.2 Moderate Motorized Area

The largest of the three classifications, this area includes 154,406 acres of County forest land and special-use land. For purposes of the Access Management Plan, it is categorized as a Moderate Motorized Area and was identified by the working group as the area that can best provide a combination of designated motorized and non-motorized uses. This classification does not exclude or permit the use of motorized vehicles over the entire block. Rather, on this area of the Forest, motorized-vehicle access is moderately regulated to allow for a blend of designated recreational opportunities. Permitted motorized uses are designated on a road-by-road basis; one permitted use for a road is exclusive of that road alone and not necessarily permitted on another road. Identified by the working group and through the public participation process, this integrated access approach of both open and closed roads with varying uses was the most popular management system. The large size and locational coverage of this block were determined by the working group as providing the greatest opportunity for integrated access. By offering this large block on a significant portion of the Forest, users should have ample access to areas that fall under the Moderate Motorized Area classification.

Stands of aspen (34 percent) are the most dominant in this block, followed by tag alder (13 percent), northern hardwood (12 percent), swamp hardwood types (10 percent), swamp conifer types (9 percent), white birch (7 percent), and lowland marsh (4 percent). The remaining 11 percent of this tract is composed primarily of muskeg bogs, fir-spruce, northern red oak, grass, red maple, and upland brush types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity and occurs throughout the year. The primary management objective is to maintain the current mix of species and enhance age diversity for timber production and wildlife habitat. The management objective for most stands of this block is

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natural maintenance. Past management has focused primarily on aspen while future management will focus more on northern hardwood, white birch, northern red oak, red maple, and fir-spruce types. Stands of aspen are managed for age-class and structural diversity through timber harvests of varying frequency, distribution, and size. The aspen type is extended when possible in areas containing poorer quality hardwood and red maple stands, for cover-type diversity, and wildlife-habitat enhancement. Stands of northern hardwoods, white birch, and northern red oak are developed and managed for quality timber production through regeneration and improvement harvests. Other considerations when managing timber on this block are to perpetuate the white birch and northern red oak types as these species are diminishing across the landscape, preserve low, wet swamp hardwood swales, protect water quality, increase thermal cover for wildlife, and promote forest aesthetics.

This block contains 4 of the County's 10 State Natural Areas. The Empire Swamp State Natural Area (1,410 acres) located in the central portion of the block, is a large peatland with high-forest conservation value as the headwaters of the Tamarack River. This peatland is a combination of several natural communities, including northern sedge meadow, northern wet forest, tamarack swamp, black ash swamp, alder thicket, open bog, and muskeg. The swamp harbors 11 rare bird species and there are 19 species of warbler in the block, including the highest known population of golden-winged warblers in the State. Five rare butterfly species and nine rare plant species have been recorded in this area.

The Erickson Creek Forest and Wetlands State Natural Area (2,089 acres), located in the north-central portion of the block, is an exceptional resource that includes a diverse assemblage of community types in close proximity. The remoteness of these communities and the near absence of recent disturbance makes this area unique in all of Wisconsin. Communities represented are open bog, northern wet forest, northern wet-mesic forest, northern hardwood swamp, northern sedge meadow, northern dry-mesic forest, boreal forest, and northern mesic forest. This block includes populations of several rare species and the bog and sedge meadow harbors 15 species of special concern.

The Nemadji River Floodplain Forest State Natural Area (341 acres), located on an isolated parcel of county ownership in the extreme northern portion of the block, is a mesic floodplain with high conservation value. This area along the banks of the Nemadji River contains diverse flora, including many canopy tree species. Large-diameter silver maple, swamp white oak, basswood, Atlantic white-cedar, white spruce, and ash (three species) are found in this block. Spring flora is rich and mesic and includes high populations of numerous species that usually are found in southern Wisconsin. The wood turtle, which is threatened in the State, also is found at this site.

The Pokegama Red Clay Flats State Natural Area (640 acres), also located in the extreme northern portion of the block is a forested area with high conservation value. This excessively poorly drained area in the headwaters of the Pokegama and Little Pokegama Rivers supports a wetland mosaic of shrub swamp, sedge meadow, emergent marsh, small ponds, and tiny upland islets of white spruce, white pine, balsam fir, and trembling aspen. Of special significance are the many populations of rare plants found in the site's wetlands. These plants are not widespread in the Lake Superior region but are concentrated near Superior with highest concentrations in this block.

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This block contains one of the County's three special grouse management areas that are enrolled in the Ruffed Grouse Society's Special Management Area Program. The Empire Grade Grouse Management Area (8,200 acres) located in the center of the block and partially overlaps with the eastern half of the Empire Swamp State Natural Area. Under a cooperative agreement with the Ruffed Grouse Society, this area is managed intensively for ruffed grouse habitat through patch timber harvests in scattered stands of aspen. Under the current agreement proposal, limited permanent and seasonal access open to public motorized travel on designated roads and trails has been proposed.

The topography in this block ranges from nearly level to steep. Primary landform patterns are undulating moraines with swamps and rolling collapsed moraines. The secondary pattern is undulating modified lacustrine moraines with deep V-shape ravines. This unit comprises many soil associations. The primary association, Newood-Freeon-Pomroy-Lupton-Metonga, consists of moderately well-drained sandy loam over loamy sand till or igneous/metamorphic bedrock along with very poorly drained mucky organic soils. Scattered drainageways and basins are common among the elongated and oval moraines. Streams, ponds, swamps, bogs, and marshes make up these lower features. Upland ridges have broad crests and gentle slopes and terrain features generally are linear and orientated from northeast to southwest, especially in the southwest region of the block.

A predominant secondary type found throughout the north-central portion of this block is the Sarwet-Keweenaw-Moodig-Lupton-Annalake-Pence-Vilas soil association. It consists primarily of moderately well-drained, well-drained, somewhat poorly drained soils with a sandy loam surface over sand till or loamy sand, very poorly drained mucky organic soils, and well-drained and excessively well-drained sandy outwash. This type is characterized by low recessional moraines intermingled with swamps and bogs.

Another soil association found in the extreme northern region of the block is the Cuttre-Miskoaki-Aminicon-Anton-Borea type which consists of somewhat poorly drained clay over calcareous clay till or loamy lacustrine. Slopes are short and complex. Soil associations found along the extreme southeastern boundary of the block are the Dairyland-Clemens-Gander-Lupton-Menahga-Pomroy and Grayling-Rubicon, Loxley-Seelyeville types, both of which consist of predominantly excessively well-drained sand over loam till or gravel outwash.

The primary concerns in managing access on this block are rutting on fragile soils, damage to riparian resources on unimproved roads and balancing motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities. Many of the logging roads can easily be rutted and damaged by both HV and OHV due to a lack of soil strength and wetness, especially during periods of wet weather. Erosion also is a concern in areas where the slope is greater than 2 percent. Roads that intersect streams, drainages, and low areas present significant potential for sedimentation, soil and vegetation damage, and scarring of the landscape. Certain segments of frozen winter roads in riparian environments cannot support motorized vehicle use. Most of the secondary public-road system that provides access to the area requires significant graveling and maintenance to make these routes accessible to HV traffic during most months.

This block includes the following Rivers: Amnicon, Black, Little Amnicon, Little Pokegama, Middle,

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Moose, Nemadgi, Pokegama, Spruce, St. Croix, St. Louis, and Tamarack, and the following Creeks: Arnold, Balsam, Bear, Beaver, Buckety, Cattle, Chases (Brook), Copper, Cranberry, Dingle, Hay, Ericson, Garison, Little Balsam, Lord, Miller, Rock, Rocky (Run), Sheosh, Spring, Stony Brook, Thompson, and Toad.

Sixty-three sections of this block have a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community as identified in the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory that was conducted in July 1999 by the Bureau of Endangered Resources.

The major recreational use in this area is hunting large and small game particularly ruffed grouse, white-tail deer, and black bear. Most recreational use in this unit occurs in late summer and fall. Other uses include viewing wildlife, nature photography, cross-country skiing, hiking, gathering firewood, fishing, trapping, horseback riding, picking berries, and camping. The following funded snowmobile trails intersect portions of the block: 43 (Gandy Dancer), 2 (Saunders Grade), 35 (Wild Rivers), 4, 4/41, 41, 5, 66 (Wrenshall Grade), 9, 930, and 935. Trails 43, 2, and 35 also are funded summer ATV trails.

This area has hosted the annual Nickerson/Holyoke Enduro motorcycle race event since 1968. The race course is largely in Minnesota's Nemadji State Forest with a small portion on Douglas County forest land in Summit, Wisconsin. Each year the race committee requests permission from the FPRC to hold the race and lists Douglas County as coinsured on a \$1 Million liability insurance policy.

6.2.1 Conditions

- (1) This block is designated as a Moderate Motorized Area for both HV and OHV use.
- (2) Both HV and OHV use is allowed on this block except where restricted.
- (3) All routes open to both HV and/or OHV use are open to motorized use as designated in type of use and time period.
- (4) All motorized uses are prohibited on closed roads and trails throughout the year or seasonally closed period.

6.2.2 Objectives

- (1) Identify open and closed routes and designate restricted motorized uses on closed routes.
- (2) Identify and close currently open roads not intended to be open by installing a sign, gate, berm, or other blockage device.
- (3) Open a moderate level of roads to motorized uses.
- (4) Distribute designated HV and/or OHV open roads as best possible across the block to disperse use patterns and provide a variety of uses.

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- (5) Examine regions of the block that currently do not have motorized access for possible development and/or improvement of strategically located primary and/or secondary access routes (dead-ends or loop-connecters) open to motorized use with select non-motorized spur components thus creating foot access in “quiet areas”.
- (6) Where applicable, use advanced standards and engineering specifications when constructing new HV and OHV open roads or improving existing routes.
- (7) Protect temporary roads for which motorized recreational access will be prohibited with an appropriately signed blockage device. Such roads may be rehabilitated and “put to bed” using various reclamation techniques, e.g., ripping, disking, barring, furrowing, and/or planting vegetation.
- (8) Examine existing dead-end and/or isolated road and trail networks for possible development and/or improvement of strategically located connectors open to motorized use, thus providing a greater opportunity for destination travel.
- (9) Where applicable, keep primary routes open to HV and/or OHV motorized use and promote walk-in access on secondary spur routes and small scattered dead-end routes.
- (10) Reduce individual or group preference by minimizing permitted motorized travel from private land into this block.
- (11) Identify and eliminate locations of unauthorized motorized travel from private land into this block and enforce continued violations.
- (12) Continue cooperating with the North County Trail Association and National Park Service in developing and establishing the North County National Scenic Trail.
- (13) Continue coordinating with the Ruffed Grouse Society’s Special Management Area Program and designate/maintain hunter walking trails in the Empire Grade Grouse Management Area.
- (14) Where feasible and appropriate, maintain the old Empire Grade to promote the historical significance of this historic railroad bed.
- (15) Continue maintaining the Douglas County Stockpile Sites 1 and 5 located east off Highway 35.
- (16) Avoid all unnecessary route construction through the Empire Swamp State Natural Area. If necessary, branch access off an existing restricted access route and use minimal construction techniques.
- (17) Avoid all unnecessary route construction through the northern portion of the Erickson Creek Forest and Wetlands State Natural Area. If necessary, branch access off an existing restricted access route and use minimal construction techniques. Carefully analyze planned road/trail development activities in the southern portion of the area to ensure that its natural integrity and beauty are protected.
- (18) Protect the natural integrity and composition of the Nemadji River Floodplain Forest and Pokegama Red Clay Flats State Natural Areas by carefully analyzing planned management activities before developing additional access points.

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6.2.3 Potential Projects

- (1) Develop parking areas along public roadways at main points of restricted access into this block.
- (2) Construct camping areas that can accommodate larger recreational vehicles and pull-behind, trailer-type vehicles where suitable along the public roadways and primary roads that access this block.
- (3) Examine all State-funded summer ATV and winter ATV and snowmobile trail systems for possible expansion.
- (4) Coordinate with the Ruffed Grouse Society and update and develop a more extensive Empire Grade Grouse Management Area Plan.
- (5) Expand the development and maintenance of designated hunter walking trails in the Empire Grade Grouse Management Area.
- (6) Design and strategically locate large information signs along public roadways and main points of access that identify the block and consider incorporating maps and other pertinent information.

6.3 Low Motorized Area

This area consists of 52,418 acres of County forest land and special-use land that was further divided into five sub-blocks; Spruce River, Poplar River, Douglas County Wildlife Management Area Block, Coppermine, and St. Croix River. For purposes of the Access Management Plan, each sub-block is categorized as a Low Motorized Area. Each area was designated by the working group based on its own unique characteristics. The Low Motorized Area classification does not exclude the use of motorized vehicles in any sub-blocks, so a user may or may not encounter a quiet experience. Rather, on these regions of the Forest, motorized vehicle access is the most highly limited and regulated. Permitted motorized uses are designated on a block-by-block basis one permitted use in one sub-block is not necessarily permitted in another. Other than routes designated as part of the funded snowmobile or winter or summer ATV trail systems, there will be no OHV motorized-use-only route designations in any sub-blocks. The scattered distribution of these five blocks across the Forest was identified by the working group as providing the greatest opportunity for users who seek this type of recreational experience. These areas offer the greatest opportunity for a wild or wilderness recreation experience.

6.3.1 Spruce River Block

This block consists of 32,658 acres of County forest land. Stands of aspen (41 percent) are the most dominant in this block, followed by tag alder (17 percent), muskeg bogs (12 percent), swamp conifer types (8 percent), swamp hardwood types (5 percent), and lowland marsh (5 percent). The remaining 11 percent of this tract is composed primarily of northern hardwood, white birch, grass, and fir-spruce types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity and occurs primarily during the winter months. A large fire in 1936, that burned most of this tract resulted in the establishment of large stands of even-age aspen. The primary management objective for this area is to maintain these large blocks of aspen for timber production and wildlife-habitat enhancement. Age-class and structural diversity is

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promoted through timber harvests of varying frequency, distribution, and size. A secondary objective is to develop an intermingling of quality northern hardwood and white birch stands throughout this tract for timber production and cover-type diversity. Other considerations when managing timber in this block are to increase coniferous thermal cover for wildlife, and sustain the many wetlands in this area.

This block contains 2 of the county's 10 State Natural Areas. The Black Lake Bog State Natural Area (2,200 acres), located in the northwestern portion of the block has high conservation value because of its complex of natural communities: soft bog, lake, northern wet forest, northern sedge meadow, open bog, and shrub-carr. This area also is noted for stunted black spruce. Species of concern at Black Lake Bog include LeConte's sparrow, northern harrier, timber wolf, lake darner, and green-striped darner. A portion of this site is within Minnesota and has been designated as a Minnesota Natural Area. The Belden Swamp State Natural Area (1,862 acres) is located in the northeastern portion of the block and has been identified as an exceptional and unique wetland resource. The large size and muskeg-like vegetation of this bog is not duplicated elsewhere in northwestern Wisconsin. Some portions are thinly vegetated with stunted black spruce and tamarack over ericaceous shrubs. Other areas are open with wire-leaved sedges and bog birch dominating. This bog supports populations of jutta arctic butterfly, LeConte's sparrow, yellow-bellied flycatcher, and northern harrier.

Most of this block also contains one of the County's three special grouse management areas that are enrolled in the Ruffed Grouse Society's Special Management Area Program. The Spruce River Grouse Management Area (18,200 acres), located throughout the central portion of the block is the largest of the special grouse management areas. Under a cooperative agreement with the Ruffed Grouse Society, the area is managed for age-class diversity of aspen while maintaining other species that benefit wildlife. This area is managed intensively for ruffed grouse habitat through patch timber harvests in scattered stands. Under the current agreement designated forest roads and trails are intended to serve as hunter walking trails and are restricted to public motorized travel.

The landscape in this unit has little local relief and terrain features generally are linear and oriented from northeast to southwest. There is little difference in elevation between uplands and lowlands. The undulating morainic mounds that protrude slightly higher than the level of the plain are separated by long, depressional valleys. These drainageways and basins are common throughout the block. Streams, ponds, swamps, bogs, and marshes make up these lower features. The upland ridges have broad crests and gentle slopes. The primary soil association in this unit is the Newood-Freeon-Pomroy-Lupton-Metonga type, which consists of moderately well-drained sandy loam over loamy sand till or igneous/metamorphic bedrock along with very poorly drained mucky organic soils. Slopes are mostly long and smooth except for the short slopes adjacent to depressional areas. The Sarwet-Keweenaw-Moodig-Lupton-Annalake-Pence-Vilas soil association, a minor type in this block, consists of moderately well-drained, well-drained, and somewhat poorly drained soils with a sandy loam surface over sand till or loamy sand, very poorly drained mucky organic soils, and well-drained and excessively well-drained sandy outwash. It is characterized primarily by low recessional moraines intermingled with swamps and bogs.

Primary concerns in managing access on this block are rutting on fragile soils and damage to riparian

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resources on unimproved roads. Many of the logging access roads can easily be rutted and damaged by both HV's and OHV's due to a lack of soil strength and wetness. Long, unfrozen segments of winter roads in riparian areas cannot support motorized vehicles use. Most of the upland roads intersect multiple streams and drainages, presenting significant potential for sedimentation and soil and vegetation damage. The limited public-road system that provides access to the area requires significant graveling and maintenance to make these routes accessible to HV traffic during most months. This block includes the Black and Spruce Rivers and Balsam, Dingle, Hay, and Toad Creeks.

Seventeen sections of this block have a threatened, rare, or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community as identified in the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory that was conducted in 1999 by the Bureau of Endangered Resources.

The major recreational use in this area is hunting large and small game, particularly ruffed grouse, white-tail deer, and black bear. Most recreational use in this unit occurs in late summer and fall. Funded snowmobile Trail 935 runs along on the southwestern boundary of the block into Minnesota and Trail 9 intersects a portion of the extreme southeastern corner. Two uses that were noted during public meetings were trapping throughout the block and winter camping within the Black Lake Bog State Natural Area.

6.3.1(a) Conditions

- (1) This block is designated as a Low Motorized Area so motorized use will be limited.
- (2) Both HV and OHV use is allowed on this block except where restricted.
- (3) Foot travel is encouraged.
- (4) No OHV-only use designations will be permitted on general forest access roads. This does not apply to the snowmobile and winter ATV and summer ATV trail networks.
- (5) All roads and trails open to both HV and/or OHV use are open to motorized use as designated in type of use and time period.
- (6) All motorized uses are prohibited on closed roads and trails throughout the year or seasonally closed period.

6.3.1(b) Objectives

- (1) Identify open and closed routes and designate restricted motorized uses on closed routes.
- (2) Identify and close currently open roads not intended to be open by installing a sign, gate, berm, or other blockage device.
- (3) Although limited motorized use will be allowed, manage this block as a "quiet area" to accommodate future growth in non-motorized recreational activities.

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- (4) Strategically locate select few designated HV and OHV open roads as best possible within the block to promote limited main points of motorized access with select non-motorized spur components.
- (5) Where applicable, use advanced standards and engineering specifications when constructing new HV and OHV open roads or improving existing routes.
- (6) Protect temporary roads for which motorized recreational access will be prohibited with an appropriately signed blockage device. Such roads may be rehabilitated and “put to bed” using various reclamation techniques, e.g., ripping, disking, barring, furrowing, and/or planting vegetation.
- (7) Reduce individual or group preference by minimizing permitted motorized travel from private land into this block.
- (8) Identify and eliminate locations of unauthorized motorized travel from private land into this block and enforce continued violations.
- (9) Continue coordinating with the Ruffed Grouse Society’s Special Management Area Program and designate/maintain hunter walking trails in the Spruce River Grouse Management Area.
- (10) Protect the natural integrity and beauty of the Black Lake Bog State Natural Area including Black Lake by carefully analyzing planned management activities before developing additional access points.
- (11) Avoid all unnecessary route construction through the Belden Swamp State Natural Area. If necessary, branch access off an existing restricted access route and use minimal construction techniques.
- (12) Continue maintaining the Belden Swamp Overlook and Douglas County Stockpile Sites 2, 3, and 4 located west off Highway 35.

6.3.1(c) Potential Projects

- (1) Develop parking areas along public roadways at main points of restricted access into this block.
- (2) Construct camping areas that can accommodate larger recreational vehicles and pull-behind, trailer-type vehicles where suitable along the public roadways and primary roads that access this block.
- (3) Coordinate with the Ruffed Grouse Society and update and develop a more extensive Spruce River Grouse Management Area Plan.
- (4) Expand the development and maintenance of designated hunter walking trails in the Spruce River Grouse Management Area.
- (5) Design and strategically locate large information signs along public roadways and main points of access that identify the block and consider incorporating maps and other pertinent information.
- (6) Develop remote, primitive walk-in camping locations.

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6.3.2 Poplar River Block

This block consists of 4,564 acres of County forest land. Stands of aspen stands (31 percent) and swamp hardwood types (23 percent) are the most dominant in this block, followed by tag alder (12 percent), northern hardwood (9 percent), swamp conifer types (8 percent), and grass (4 percent). The remaining 12 percent of this tract is composed primarily of lowland marsh, northern red oak, white birch, fir-spruce, and upland brush types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity and occurs throughout the year. The primary management objective is to maintain the current of species mix and enhance age diversity for timber production and wildlife habitat. The management objective for most stands of this block is natural maintenance. Past management has maintained aspen but future management focus on regenerating northern hardwoods, birch, and northern red oak in areas with little or no aspen component. A major concern in this block is the threat of increased activity of the two-lined chestnut borer, which attacks northern red oak. A secondary objective is using salvage and sanitation harvests to minimize the loss of quality northern red oak stands in conjunction with their regeneration.

This block contains one of the County's three special grouse management areas that are enrolled in the Ruffed Grouse Society's Special Management Area Program. The Poplar River Grouse Management Area (1,700 acres), located on the eastern third of the block, is the smallest of the special grouse management areas. Under a cooperative agreement with the Ruffed Grouse Society, the area is managed for age-class diversity of aspen while maintaining other species that benefit wildlife. This area is managed intensively for ruffed grouse through patch timber harvests in scattered stands. Under the current agreement, designated forest roads and trails are open to public motorized travel.

The topography in this block ranges from nearly level to steeply rolling hills. The primary soil association in this unit is the Sarwet-Keweenaw-Moodig-Lupton-Annalake-Pence-Vilas type, which consists of moderately well-drained, well-drained, and somewhat poorly drained soils with a sandy loam surface over sand till or loamy sand, very poorly drained mucky organic soils, and well-drained and excessively well-drained sandy outwash. In most areas, swells, hills, and ridges are interspersed with many small depressions and drainage valleys. Many of these depressions and drainage valleys contain ponds, bogs, or swamps. A secondary soil association that runs through the center of this block is the Vilas-Keweenaw-Sultz type, which consists mostly of excessively drained and well-drained sandy soils with a loamy sand surface over sand outwash or loamy sand till. It is characterized primarily by low outwash plains and moraines found within the Poplar River watershed.

The primary concern in managing access on this block is providing low motorized access in the northeastern region of the Forest for those who frequent this area during non-winter months. Throughout the winter season, numerous funded winter ATV and snowmobile trails intersect this block. Although many of the existing roads and trails can support motorized use other than during winter months, this area has been designated as one of low motorized access for purposes of the Access Management Plan.

The Poplar River flows through the center of this block.

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One section of this block has a threatened, rare, or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community as identified in the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory that was conducted in July 1999 by the Bureau of Endangered Resources.

Partly because of its proximity to the Brule River State Forest, this area has received heavy pressure from hunters of large and small game hunting and those who use winter trails. Most recreational use occurs in late summer and fall, particularly by hunters seeking ruffed grouse, white-tailed deer, and black bear. Funded snowmobile Trail 4 runs through the center of the block from east to west direction. Trail 4 intersects Trail 24 toward the north boundary of the block where Trail 24 continues northward.

6.3.2(a) Conditions

- (1) This block is designated as a Low Motorized Area so motorized use will be limited.
- (2) Both HV and OHV use is allowed on this block except where restricted.
- (3) Foot travel is encouraged.
- (4) No OHV-only use designations will be permitted on general forest access roads. This does not apply to the snowmobile and winter ATV and summer ATV trail networks.
- (5) All roads and trails open to both HV and/or OHV use are open to motorized use as designated in type of use and time period.
- (6) All motorized uses are prohibited on closed roads and trails throughout the year or seasonally closed period.

6.3.2(b) Objectives

- (1) Identify open and closed routes and designate restricted motorized uses on closed routes.
- (2) Identify and close currently open roads not intended to be open by installing a sign, gate, berm, or other blockage device.
- (3) Although limited motorized use will be allowed, manage this block as a “quiet area” to accommodate future growth in non-motorized recreational activities.
- (4) Strategically locate select few designated HV and OHV open roads as best possible within the block to promote limited main points of motorized access with select non-motorized spur components.
- (5) Where applicable, use advanced standards and engineering specifications when constructing new HV and OHV open roads or improving existing routes.
- (6) Protect temporary roads for which motorized recreational access will be prohibited with an appropriately signed blockage device. Such roads may be rehabilitated and “put to bed” using various reclamation techniques, e.g., ripping, disking, barring, furrowing, and/or planting vegetation.

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- (7) Reduce individual or group preference by minimizing permitted motorized travel from private land into this block.
- (8) Identify and eliminate locations of unauthorized motorized travel from private land into this block and enforce continued violations.
- (9) Continue coordinating with the Ruffed Grouse Society's Special Management Area Program and designate/maintain hunter walking trails in the Poplar River Grouse Management Area.

6.3.2(c) Potential Projects

- (1) Develop parking areas along public roadways at main points of restricted access into this block.
- (2) Construct camping areas that can accommodate larger recreational vehicles and pull-behind, trailer-type vehicles where suitable along the public roadways and primary roads that access this block.
- (3) Coordinate with the Ruffed Grouse Society and update and develop a more extensive Poplar River Grouse Management Area Plan.
- (4) Expand the development and maintenance of designated hunter walking trails in the Poplar River Grouse Management Area.
- (5) Design and strategically locate large information signs along public roadways and main points of access that identify the block and consider incorporating maps and other pertinent information.
- (6) Develop remote, primitive walk-in camping locations.

6.3.3 Coppermine Block

This block consists of 8,708 acres of County forest land. Stands of aspen (32 percent) and northern hardwood (29 percent) are the most dominant in this block, followed by swamp hardwood types (7 percent), jack pine (6 percent), red maple (5 percent), grass (5 percent), northern red oak (4 percent), and red pine (4 percent). The remaining 8 percent of this tract is composed primarily of muskeg bogs, tag alder, upland brush, lowland marsh, swamp conifer, and hemlock-hardwood types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity and occurs throughout the year. The primary management objective for this area is maintaining blocks of aspen and northern hardwoods for timber production and wildlife habitat. The northern hardwood type is all-age managed for high quality on the better sites in the Forest. A secondary objective is to develop an intermingling of jack pine and red pine stands throughout this tract for timber production and cover-type diversity and perpetuating the hemlock component, which comprises nearly 60 acres, and sustain the many wetland ecosystems present in this block.

The topography on this block is gently sloping, and characteristic landform pattern is hilly bedrock-controlled moraines. The primary soil association in this unit is the Sarona-Sarwet-Matonga-Lupton type, which consists of well-drained and moderately well-drained sandy loam over acid loamy sand till or igneous/metamorphic bedrock along with very poorly drained mucky organic soils. In most areas,

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swells, hills, and ridges are interspersed with many small kettles, bogs, swamps, or narrow drainage valleys. Slopes are mostly short and complex. Minor soil associations along the northwestern boundary of this block are the Grayling-Menahga-Rubicon and Mahtomedi-Menahga-Graycalm-Seelyeville-Loxley types which consist primarily of excessively drained sandy and loamy sand soils over sand outwash. The topography in outwash areas that include of knolls, swells, hills, and ridges is undulating to rolling. Depressional areas such as basins and drainages are common and many of these contain ponds, streams, rivers, bogs, or swamps. The terrain is generally linear and orientated from northeast to southwest.

Primary concerns for managing access on this block are rutting on fragile soils, damage to riparian resources on unimproved roads and providing low motorized access in the southeastern region of the Forest for those who frequent this area during nonwinter months. Many of the logging roads, especially those in the central, eastern and southern portions of the block can be easily rutted and damaged by HV's and OHV's because of wetness. Most of these roads intersect multiple streams and drainages, presenting significant potential for sedimentation and both soil and vegetation damage. Although many of the existing roads and trails along the northwestern boundary and northern section of this block can support motorized use, this area has been identified as one of low motorized access for purposes of the Access Management Plan.

Cole, Haymaker, and O'Hara Creeks, and the Ounce, and Totagatic Rivers are present on this block.

One geographic section of this block a threatened, rare, or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community as identified in the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory that was conducted in July 1999 by the Bureau of Endangered Resources.

The major recreational use in this area is hunting of large and small game particularly ruffed grouse, white-tailed deer, and black bear. Most recreational use in this unit occurs in late summer and fall.

6.3.3(a) Conditions

- (1) This block is designated as a Low Motorized Area so motorized use will be limited.
- (2) Both HV and OHV use is allowed on this block except where restricted.
- (3) Foot travel is encouraged.
- (4) No OHV-only use designations will be permitted on general forest access roads. This does not apply to the snowmobile and winter ATV and summer ATV trail networks.
- (5) All roads and trails open to both HV and/or OHV use are open to motorized use as designated in type of use and time period.
- (6) All motorized uses are prohibited on closed roads and trails throughout the year or seasonally closed period.

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6.3.3(b) Objectives

- (1) Identify open and closed routes and designate restricted motorized uses on closed routes.
- (2) Identify and close currently open roads not intended to be open by installing a sign, gate, berm, or other blockage device.
- (3) Although limited motorized use will be allowed, manage this block as a “quiet area” to accommodate future growth in non-motorized recreational activities.
- (4) Strategically locate select few designated HV and OHV open roads as best possible within the block to promote limited main points of motorized access with select non-motorized spur components.
- (5) Where applicable, use advanced standards and engineering specifications when constructing new HV and OHV open roads or improving existing routes.
- (6) Protect temporary roads for which motorized recreational access will be prohibited with an appropriately signed blockage device. Such roads may be rehabilitated and “put to bed” using various reclamation techniques, e.g., ripping, disking, barring, furrowing, and/or planting vegetation.
- (7) Increase communication and cooperation with Bayfield, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties when regulating motorized access on routes that originate and intersect lands in those Counties.
- (8) Reduce individual or group preference by minimizing permitted motorized travel from private land into this block.
- (9) Identify and eliminate locations of unauthorized motorized travel from private land into this block and enforce continued violations.

6.3.3(c) Potential Projects

- (1) Develop parking areas along public roadways at main points of restricted access into this block.
- (2) Construct camping areas that can accommodate larger recreational vehicles and pull-behind, trailer-type vehicles where suitable along the public roadways and primary roads that access this block.
- (3) Cooperate with the Ruffed Grouse Society and discuss designating and developing this area or a portion of into a Ruffed Grouse Society Special Management Area.
- (4) Design and strategically locate large information signs along public roadways and main points of access that identify the block and consider incorporating maps and other pertinent information.
- (5) Develop remote, primitive walk-in camping locations.

6.3.4 Douglas County Wildlife Management Area Block

Although this 5,583 acre block is commonly referred to as the Bird Sanctuary, its official designation is the Douglas County Wildlife Management Area, 3006 acres of County-owned forest land and 994 acres of State-owned fee title land. This County forest land currently is leased to the WDNR under an agreement that gives management authority to the latter. The only areas not covered under the agreement are immediate areas that are directly adjacent to a clubhouse and horse corrals, dog kennels, and barns. Although most of this block is managed by the WDNR, the working group, with support from the WDNR property manager, agreed that this area should be included in the Access Management Plan for informational purposes. Any direction provided by the Plan with respect to types of use and route classifications does not supersede that prescribed by the WDNR. For additional information on the policies and regulations of the Douglas County Wildlife Management Area including permitted uses and route designations, contact the WDNR Douglas County Wildlife Management Area Property Manager, 1401 Tower Avenue, Superior, WI 54880.

At the time of Plan development, detailed data on vegetative cover types area data were not available for this block. An estimated 75 percent of the area currently is maintained with the grass/brush savannah, which is representative of the historical pine barren type. The remaining 25 percent is maintained with small stands of young aspen and jack pine. Small areas of lowland marsh and scattered ponds also are present. Vegetation management in the form of prescribe burning is the primary technique for developing and maintaining of the pine barren type, followed by commercial and non-commercial timber harvesting. The primary management objective for this area is to maintain early, open stages of pine barrens habitat with stands of young aspen and jack pine. A secondary objective is enhancing recreational opportunities and protecting aesthetic values.

This 240 acre block contains the Solon Springs Sharptail Barrens State Natural Area. Owned by Douglas County and managed by the WDNR, it is located in the northeastern corner of the block. With a large pine barrens with widely scattered clumps of jack pine, Hill's oak, bur oak grubs, and occasional red pine, the area's vegetation is characteristic of presettlement vegetation that covered much of northwestern Wisconsin. Maintained by fire, this area includes some of the best habitat for the rare sharp-tailed grouse in the State. Shrubs species include sweet fern, blueberry, dewberry, New Jersey tea, hazelnut, willow, wild rose, chokecherry, and bearberry. Groundlayer species include big and little blue-stem, prairie alumroot, puccoon, Canada mayflower, wormwood, asters, and goldenrods. Bird life is dominated by species that require extensive open landscapes. In addition to the sharp-tailed grouse, these include the upland sandpiper, grasshopper sparrow, Connecticut warbler, and Tennessee warbler. Other bird species that inhabit this area include the mourning dove, eastern towhee, Brewer's blackbird, vesper sparrow, field sparrow, and recently introduced wild turkey.

The topography on this block is nearly level to gently sloping. The characteristic landform pattern is nearly level outwash plains to sloping outwash valleys with stream traces and floodplains. The primary soil association in this unit is the Grayling-Rubicon, Loxley-Seelyeville type, which consists of excessively well-drained sand over sand outwash. This pitted outwash plain contains numerous glacial sags and depressions that are interspersed with small kettles, lakes, bogs, swamps, and marshes. This association was formed from sands and gravel carried by water from melting glaciers; because

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these deposits were water washed, there is a noted absence of large stones in the area. A minor soil association within the center of this block is the Rubicon-Sayner-Croswell-Lupton-Gander-Dechamps type, which consists primarily of excessively well-drained and moderately well-drained sandy soils with a sand or loamy sand surface over sand outwash, and very poorly drained mucky organic soils. Slopes are mostly short and smooth.

Primary concerns in managing access on this block are protecting the pine barrens ecosystem and providing a low motorized access in the central region of the Forest. This sandy soil area has shallow soil depth and areas of rolling terrain, making this region prone to erosion and vegetation damage by both motorized and non-motorized users.

Leo Creek is present in the northern region of this block.

All eight sections of this block have a threatened, rare, or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community as identified in the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory that was conducted in 1999 by the Bureau of Endangered Resources.

This unit encounters year-round recreational use, providing outstanding opportunities for hunting large and small game, wildlife viewing; nature photography, cross-country skiing and running, hiking, horseback riding, and camping. Funded snowmobile Trails 5 and 35 (Wild Rivers Trail) run along the extreme eastern boundary and intersect the northeastern corner of the block. Trail 35 also is a funded summer ATV trail. The North Country National Scenic Trail footpath intersects the entire block from north to south. Each year, this block hosts numerous bird dog field trials and is nationally recognized for these events. The county also maintains a clubhouse, dog kennels, horse stables and barns in the north-central portion of this block. These facilities are used for a wide range of activities in the spring and fall. This block of particular interest to the Friends of the Bird Sanctuary, which was founded to help protect and preserve the Douglas County Wildlife Management Area.

The following conditions, objectives, and potential projects in the Access Management Plan were provided by the WDNR. For additional information on any of the following items, contact the WDNR.

6.3.4(a) Conditions

- (1) This block is designated as a Low Motorized Area so motorized use will be limited.
- (2) The signage system described in the Access Management Plan does not apply to this block. This State Wildlife Area is signed according to State standards.
- (3) HV use is allowed on this block except where restricted.
- (4) OHV use is prohibited on this block other than on the snowmobile and winter ATV and summer ATV trail networks.
- (5) Horse use is allowed on designated trails and elsewhere as authorized by dog trial permits.

(6) All motorized uses are prohibited on closed roads and trails throughout the year or seasonally closed period.

6.3.4(b) Objectives

- (1) Continue coordinating with and following WDNR direction in the management of the area.
- (2) Maintain this block for low HV and very limited OHV use.
- (3) Maintain the dog trail and horse trail for HV and horse use, and for foot travel.
- (4) Continue to encourage foot travel, especially on the North County Trail.

6.3.4(c) Potential Projects

- (1) Develop an information kiosk and parking area along Bird Road.
- (2) Establish a trail head for the North County Trail.
- (3) Develop and maintain a walking nature trail/bird house trail and develop educational signs and brochures.

6.3.5 St. Croix Wild and Scenic Riverway Block

This block consists of 904 acres of County forest land. Swamp hardwood (41 percent), open water (22 percent), and tag alder (17 percent) types are dominant in this block, followed by swamp conifer (9 percent), fir-spruce (6 percent), and aspen (3 percent). The remaining 2 percent of this tract is composed primarily of upland brush and muskeg bog types. All management within this block must meet requirements of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and follow the objectives as outlined in the National Park Service's master plan for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The DCFD has agreed to define the boundary of the Scenic Riverway Zone as no point less than 412 feet from the river's edge. Timber harvesting will be prohibited within the initial 100 feet from the river's edge and all management activities within the remaining 312 feet will follow the WDNR's Class A Aesthetic Management Zone guidelines. All new road and trail construction within the Scenic Riverway Zone is limited to all but necessary routes and must meet standards and conditions prescribed in the master plan.

The topography on this block is generally level to steep. The characteristic landform pattern is nearly level outwash plains to sloping outwash valleys with stream traces and floodplains. This unit comprises of the Grayling-Rubicon, Loxley-Seelyeville soil association, which consists of excessively well-drained sand over sand outwash. During the last glacial period about 10,000 years ago, the St. Croix River Valley was a major drainage channel for glacial meltwater from the Lake Superior Basin. The river valley eroded the glacial outwash plains and exposed the basalt and sandstone bedrock. This pitted outwash floodplain contains numerous depressions such as drainages and basins. Slopes are short and abrupt, particularly those immediately adjacent to the river channel.

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Primary concerns in managing access on this block are protecting its aesthetic, recreational, geologic, historic, and cultural values, improving and maintaining the area in a largely primitive state, and developing and maintaining the block's scenic beauty.

The Beaver, Cattle, and Sheosh Creeks flow into the St. Croix River on this block.

Five sections of this block are a threatened, rare, or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community as identified in the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory that was conducted in July 1999 by the Bureau of Endangered Resources.

This unit receives significant year-round recreational use, providing outstanding opportunities for camping, wildlife viewing, canoeing, nature photography, cross-country skiing, hiking, fishing, trapping, berry picking, and hunting large and small game. Some unimproved campsites and fishing areas along the river on County forest land receive moderate use. Four landing areas (County Road T, Louis Park, Schoen Park, and Dry) that are maintained by the National Park Service provide users with basic facilities such as canoe access, restrooms, and primitive shoreline campsites (for additional information, and maps, contact the National Park Service, St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, Namekagon River Visitor Center, Highway 63, Trego, WI 54888 or www.nps.gov/sacn). This block is of particular interest to the Upper St. Croix Watershed Alliance an alliance of organizations and individuals that was founded to help maintain and improve water quality in the Upper St. Croix watershed.

6.3.5(a) Conditions

- (1) This block is designated as a Low Motorized Area so motorized use will be limited.
- (2) Both HV and OHV use is allowed on this block except where restricted.
- (3) Foot travel is encouraged.
- (4) No OHV-only use designations will be permitted on general forest access roads. This does not apply to the snowmobile and winter ATV and summer ATV trail networks.
- (5) All roads and trails open to both HV and/or OHV use are open to motorized use as designated in type of use and time period.
- (6) All motorized uses are prohibited on closed roads and trails throughout the year or seasonally closed period.

6.3.5(b) Objectives

- (1) Identify open and closed routes and designate restricted motorized uses on closed routes.
- (2) Identify and close currently open roads not intended to be open by installing a sign, gate, berm, or other blockage device.

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- (3) Although limited motorized use will be allowed, manage this block as a “quiet area” to accommodate future growth in non-motorized recreational activities.
- (4) Rely on Town, County, and/or State public roadways to provide access into this block.
- (5) Avoid all new road construction and development within this block except for emergency purposes.
- (6) Apply road and trail policies and management guidelines that meet the requirements of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
- (7) Comply with Scenic River road and trail objectives outlined in the National Park Service’s master plan for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.
- (8) Reduce individual or group preference by minimizing permitted motorized travel from private land into this block.
- (9) Identify and eliminate locations of unauthorized motorized travel from private land into this block and enforce continued violations.

6.3.5(c) Potential Projects

- (1) Maintain existing parking and primitive camping areas along public roadways within this block.
- (2) Coordinate with the National Park Service in cooperative projects designed to enhance the aesthetic and recreational values of this area.
- (3) Design and strategically locate large information signs along public roadways and main points of access that identify the block and consider incorporating maps and other pertinent information.