

COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 700

ROADS AND ACCESS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page</u>
700	ACCESS CONTROL & HISTORY.....	2
705	CHAPTER OBJECTIVES	3
710	ROADS.....	4
	710.1 PERMANENT PRIMARY ROADS	4
	710.2 PERMANENT SECONDARY ROADS	5
	710.3 TEMPORARY ROADS	6
	710.4 STATE, COUNTY, TOWN DRIVEWAY PERMITS	6
	710.4.1 State Highways.....	6
	710.4.2 County Highways	7
	710.4.3 Town Roads.....	7
	710.5 UTILITIES.....	7
	710.6 CULVERTS.....	7
715	RESTRICTED ACCESS AREAS	8
720	ROAD CONSTRUCTION BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR WATER QUALITY	8
725	SIGNS.....	8
	725.1 SIGNING STANDARDS.....	9
730	ACCESS PLAN	9

700 ACCESS CONTROL AND HISTORY

Resource management, protection activities, recreational uses, and other public uses on the Lincoln County Forest require several different types of access. Since the Forest is large and diverse, a broad network of access opportunities have developed over the years. A combination of geography, soils, vegetation, surface waters, seasons of the year, presence/absence of roads or trails, ownership of adjoining lands, and public regulations interact to control access to any part of the Forest.

Many of the existing roads and trails were originally developed as logging roads, forest fire protection lanes, or trails used to reach popular hunting and fishing areas. The locations and standards for these earlier roads were not routinely established by county personnel, nor were they maintained on a regular basis.

Over the years, the road density and frequency of vehicle use on the Forest has increased in response to an expanding number of motorized recreational vehicles and to provide access for harvesting timber. Often times, different uses have occurred on the same trails with minimal conflicts. But the diverse demands for, and uses of, the County Forest have reached the point where integrated access management planning is needed.

Lincoln County, along with a Citizen's Advisory Group, developed an Access Plan for the Lincoln County Forest which involved much public participation. The intention of the Citizens Advisory Group was to promote awareness of conflicts and reduce and resolve those conflicts. Ongoing cooperation and respect for other users, along with ongoing public involvement has made this Access Plan a useful working document. The Access Plan is a tool that has been used by the Committee and Forestry Department personnel to implement procedures that will enhance and protect the use of the Forest and its resources for current and future generations alike.

List of problem areas and reasons for access planning.

User conflict between groups: e.g., snowmobiling versus cross-country skiing; hunting on foot versus use of vehicles for access to game populations.

Safety: e.g., pleasure riding of horses on the same trail with ATV vehicle traffic, or

hiking.

Erosion: soils eroding due to use, or over-use by vehicles without routine maintenance.

Damage to access: rutted or impassable roads requiring costly repair by the county or other specific user groups (e.g., snowmobile/ATV/UTV club, loggers).

Law Enforcement: protection of the public and the County's natural resources.

Litter: depositing garbage and waste on the Forest.

Over-utilization of a resource; e.g. reduced availability of trophy-sized deer, excessive harvest of ruffed grouse along trails, site damage from too many uses.

Crowding: e.g. complaints from hunters about intensified competition for traditional hunting areas as a result of better access.

Fires: e.g. increased exposure of the resource to forest fire occurrence.

Endangered species management: e.g. high road densities conflict with eagle and osprey nest disturbance.

Invasive species: e.g. introduction of invasive exotic species along travel routes.

Developmental trends: e.g. preservation of the County Forest solitude by limiting access versus development of high intensity use by additional roads and unlimited access.

Road placement: e.g. some roads should be closed for improper location and evaluated for replacement.

Providing a clear and concise policy for the public.

705 CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

1. Provide direction to the committee and resource managers in order to maintain a network of roads and trails on the County Forest. This will meet the needs for resource management and protection activities, as well as provide public access for recreation opportunities.
2. Identify the distribution, density, and types of roads and uses of roads and trails needed to establish a safe and efficient transportation and recreation system that complements the economic, environmental, and social interest in the County Forest.
3. Identify the existing and future County Forest roads eligible for transportation aids

under s. 86.315(1), Wis. Stats.

4. Identify areas on the County Forest where the access is limited or restricted.
5. Identify the provisions and criteria that will be policy when addressing management issues on the County Forest.

710 ROADS

Lincoln County Forest staff will oversee the construction and maintenance of all roads within the County Forest. The specifications for road construction and maintenance will vary with the frequency, duration, and planned use of each road. Three major types of roads occur on the Forest: permanent primary roads; permanent secondary roads, and temporary roads.

New road establishment should consider information identifying areas with sensitive soils or severe slopes that have the potential for adverse water quality impacts from land management practices. County staff can work with local DNR forest hydrologists to develop site-specific measures where appropriate and to follow all required permitting processes when applicable

The forest should have enough roads to provide sufficient access, without degrading water resources, while still maintaining a quality recreational experience. Program evaluation of road infrastructure will continuously occur.

710.1 PERMANENT PRIMARY FOREST ROADS (County Forest Roads)

These roads are the primary roads accessing the County Forest. They are designed, constructed, and maintained for year-round use. These roads serve as essential access corridors for multiple use management. Some of these roads are graveled and routinely graded. Vehicle use may be restricted at various times of the year to minimize physical damage to the road or for safety reasons or to accommodate a groomed snowmobile or ski trail.

Forest roads in this category qualify for the County Forest Road Aids program. Qualifying roads in this program must meet minimum design standards set by WI Statute Section

86.315 (4) (a) and 86.315 (3) and administered by WI DOT. A yearly aid payment is used to maintain and improve these certified public roads. The following table lists the roads currently certified under s. 86.31(1), Wis. Stats. Also included are roads proposed for addition once improvements meet statute requirements.

LINCOLN COUNTY CURRENT WDOT CERTIFIED

ROAD NAME	LENGTH (MI)	TOWNSHIP
HORN LAKE ROAD	3.70	BIRCH/MERRILL/SCHLEY
CAMP AVE.	6.60	HARDING/TOMAHAWK
SWAMP ROAD	2.69	HARDING/TOMAHAWK
CINDER ROAD	2.70	HARRISON
WILDWOOD AVE.	4.55	TOMAHAWK
POPLAR ROAD	2.66	TOMAHAWK
ARMSTRONG CREEK ROAD	3.54	TOMAHAWK
AMENT LAKE ROAD	0.71	HARRISON
HIGH LAKE ROAD	0.10	HARRISON
TOTAL	27.25	

These permanent primary roads will be maintained and remain open to public use. These roads must be designated as a snowmobile or ATV route to be open for snowmobile or ATV use.

710.2 PERMANENT SECONDARY ROADS

These roads often serve a variety of uses including forest management, fire protection, and

recreation. These roads are maintained as part of a permanent road system but are often narrower than permanent primary roads and are built and maintained to lower standards. Some of these roads are designed for use only when the ground is frozen or firm.

Some roads in this category are located in areas on the Forest where motor vehicle use is limited or restricted. In these instances, the roads will be blocked and/or signed as restricted.

In instances where motorized traffic is restricted, vehicle access will only be authorized for planned management activities, fire protection, and in cases where motorized handicapped access has been approved. Foot traffic is allowed on all roads.

710.3 TEMPORARY ROADS

Many of the roads on the Forest fall into this classification. These roads are designed and constructed for short-term use for a specific project; often for timber harvest access. These roads are used only for a short duration and when the activity is done, the temporary road is closed. These roads are naturally or artificially revegetated and often closed by use of earthen berms/bunkers or other physical barriers. In some cases, roads are completely closed with slash and debris to prevent future use and to encourage natural regeneration of trees.

Temporary roads on existing and past sales will be considered for closure. Reasons will include protection of perpetually wet soils, human safety, and prevention of illegal dumping.

The need for new temporary roads will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Road locations will be included in designing timber harvests. Consideration will be given to the objectives within each County Forest unit, existing road density, potential use, and soil type. Road abandonment considerations: Road abandonment will be considered as needed with full consideration given for access along with protection of the resource.

710.4 STATE, COUNTY, TOWN DRIVEWAY PERMITS

710.4.1 State Highways

Wisconsin DOT generally requires permits for permanent and temporary driveways on state highways. The County should track and retain permit records and work with local DOT officials for access.

710.4.2 County Highways

A driveway permit must be obtained for any new or existing driveway before construction or replacement is done. There is a fee for this permit which may be mailed or dropped off at the Merrill or Tomahawk Highway Shop. See Lincoln County Highway Driveway Policy at <https://co.lincoln.wi.us/highway/page/permits>.

710.4.3 Town Roads

The County will consult with local officials when access is required off a town road in order to comply with local town road regulations.

710.5 UTILITIES

Access of the County Forest for Utility purposes is covered in Chapter 520.5.

710.6 CULVERTS

In many cases culverts are needed in all three classifications of roads that are on the County Forest when dealing with drainages, wetlands and stream crossings. Some of these are temporarily placed culverts that are used during a specific project then removed, while others are permanent structures.

In all instances, culverts should be placed according to required DNR permitting procedures and should follow BMP's for culverts that can be found in chapters 4 and 5 of the *WI BMP's for Water Quality* (PUB FR-093 2010).

Routine maintenance of these structures should also be completed to make sure structures are adequately working. Lincoln County maintains a GIS database of culvert locations on the Lincoln County Forest. A record of culvert size, type, replacement date, and other information is maintained for each culvert.

715 RESTRICTED ACCESS AREAS

In addition to providing trails for motorized vehicle use, the Forest may also provide and designate areas where motorized equipment is not permitted unless authorized by the Committee. The principal intent of these areas is to prevent environmental damage to sensitive areas, protect historical or archeological sites, protect endangered and threatened species, provide for human safety and provide areas for quiet, secluded recreation. The following areas have been designated as limited motorized access areas on the Lincoln County Forest (See Lincoln County Forest Access Plan-Section 730):

- Mail Route Block
- Wildwood Block
- Underdown Block-Core Area
- Harrison Block Wirth Property and approved surrounding area.

720 ROAD CONSTRUCTION BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR WATER QUALITY

The layout and construction of any new road or trail situated on the County Forest shall adhere to *Wisconsin's Best Management Practices for Water Quality* (PUB-FR-093-2010). This access management plan addresses the need and diversity level of forest roads and trails within the County Forest. The BMP Manual provides guidelines for road construction. Soil disturbance activities in highly erodible soil areas may require mitigating measures in excess of those currently listed in the Best Management Practices manual (PUB-FR-093-2010). Wider buffers, sediment control structures and water diversion techniques will be used as appropriate in these sensitive areas.

725 SIGNS

Signs on the County Forest will be used discreetly to perform and function with minimal disruption to the multiple uses of the Forest. Private signs promoting personal, commercial or political objectives are not permitted. Signs erected by the county for management

purposes or by non-profit recreational trail groups will be as follows:

1. Informational Type Signs
 - A. Interpretive Signs - to educate the general public about forest management practices.
 - B. Public Land Signs - to identify the land as Lincoln County Forest property.
 - C. Trail Markers - to provide direction and safety to trail users.
 - D. Scientific, Historical or Geological Markers - to identify points of interest.
 - E. Recreational Facility Markers - to identify park entrances, etc.
 - F. Directional Markers.
2. Regulatory Type Signs - to regulate the use of the Forest in specific areas.

725.1 SIGNING STANDARDS

To assure that signs will serve a purpose without damaging aesthetics, signage standards set forth in the Lincoln County Access Plan will be maintained (see Signage Chapter of Lincoln County Forest Access Plan- Section 730):

730 ACCESS PLAN

INTRODUCTION CHAPTER

1. PROLOGUE

The Lincoln County Forest was founded in 1935 and presently consists of 100,843 acres. In the 1930's much of these lands had been cut over, burned and left tax delinquent. Access and the desire for access was very limited at that time, but over the years timber harvesting and recreational use of these lands has increased the number of roads and access points to the County Forest. With this increased use, problems have developed which resource managers and citizens must address. The problem areas that have been identified are user conflict, resource degradation, litter, law enforcement, endangered resources,

crowding, invasive plants, etc. This Access Plan was developed to address these problems along with the changing and increasing uses of the Lincoln County Forest.

The Access Plan was developed by a 10-member Citizen Advisory Group and a Lincoln County Forestry, Land and Parks Committee member. The representatives of this group were made up of the main users of the county forest and were elected by their peers. This group was assisted, for technical information, by a support team comprised of DNR and County staff.

In the process of developing the Access Plan, Lincoln County was divided into eight (8) blocks as follows: Harrison Block, Highway 8 Block, Highway T Block, Mail Route Block, New Wood Block, Pine Tree Lane Block, Underdown Block and Wildwood Block.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Access Plan is to provide direction to the present and future Forestry Committees and resource managers working on the County Forest. The Plan provides balanced access to a wide variety of groups while still protecting the natural resource. The responsibility to protect those natural resources is a shared duty between Lincoln County and the public who use this forest.

To accomplish this mission, scientific, economic and social values along with addressing the safety and education of the public users of this forest were considered. A final element addressed was to formulate a method to enforce the conditions set forth in this Plan.

With the appropriate implementation of these issues, proper management will occur. The benefactors of proper implementation of conditions set forth in the Access Plan will be the environment as well as the people who use the Lincoln County Forest.

3. HISTORY OF ROADS AND ACCESS ON THE LINCOLN COUNTY FOREST

A. TIMBER HARVEST BEGINNING

From approximately 1860 to 1920 much of the timber in the County was logged, providing raw materials for a thriving timber industry and a growing country. The slash left behind from the logging left ideal conditions for wildfires to occur, and from 1920 to

1940 many fires burned throughout the county. After the timber was cut and the fires went through, land that was not suitable for agriculture was left barren and tax delinquent. During 1934, the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors began discussing the possibility of a forest reserve. It was felt that thousands of acres of tax delinquent lands would best be utilized by keeping them in timber production. In December of 1934, 60,000 acres were qualified for the state's forest crop program and were included in the Forestry and Recreation District.

On May 7, 1935 the County Forest Reserve was established with these and other pending lands. By November 13, 1935 Lincoln County had 74,247 acres included in the Forest Reserve. By comparison, today, the Lincoln County Forest has a land area of about 100,843 acres, which makes up approximately 17.5% of the County's land surface.

On May 6, 1936 the County Forest Ordinance was drafted. This ordinance established the Lincoln County Forest and outlined its uses and regulations. (s. 28.11 Wis. Stats., Administration of County Forests)

While in the process of harvesting and transporting forest products to the mills over the years, timber producers have built the majority of miles that make up the County Forest trail system. Rarely did staff from the County Forest or the Department of Natural Resources design, locate or set standards for these trails.

The demand and need for the harvesting of forest products has increased. Even as more timber has been removed, the forestry staff has decreased the size of sale areas to help improve diversity of age class, and improve the management of timber types. This has led to increases in the need for roads to access the timber resource. Since the early 1980's, the forest harvest contracts have specified that the Forestry Department will approve the location of logging roads.

It is understood that vehicles used in the management of the County Forest by staff, timber sale contractors, or other approved uses (handicapped, firewood, boughs, etc.) are exempt from certain regulations as specified in their respective written agreements with Lincoln County.

B. OTHER MOTORIZED VEHICLES

The Lincoln County Forest has experienced a large increase in recreational vehicle users. An increase in snowmobile use was noted in the 1970's and 1980's, and more recent increases have been seen in ATV/UTV use. ATV/UTV use is presently noted on all blocks of the forest. Use ranges from casual riders on primary and secondary roads to legal travel on open roads and trails in the most isolated areas by trappers and hunters. During the mid-1980's, development of an ATV trail was considered on the New Wood block of the County Forest. Several problems were encountered that would not allow this ambition to become a reality. These included numerous wetland crossings that would have to be negotiated, town roads that wouldn't be opened for ATV use, and this area was included in the eastern timber wolf range. As a result, a 15-mile ATV trail was developed in the Harrison Hills block instead. This state funded trail has been expanded to nearly 50 miles and is open from the time the trail opens in May to December 1. In addition, many county and town roads have been opened to ATV/UTV use in order to provide for connectivity within the county and beyond.

There are also many miles of snowmobile and winter ATV trails available to use both on and off the County Forest. Additional development of snowmobile trails is possible and relocation of snowmobile trails may be necessary due to private easement changes or environmental conditions. Environmental damage has also occurred as a result of four-wheel drive highway licensed vehicles in certain sensitive areas. This has resulted in the closure of roads that have the potential to be damaged by such traffic. Regulations to protect the county's resources will ensure that future generations enjoy the same uses and enjoyment of our county forest that we enjoy today.

C. NON-MOTORIZED USE

Non-motorized users of the existing road network have also increased dramatically. Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, mountain biking, fat tire biking and hiking show the most noteworthy increase in visitor days in the established trail category. The Underdown Recreational Area has a three-loop cross-country ski trail system as well as a three-loop

mountain bike tract. The County also maintains the 6.6-mile Hiawatha Trail that goes north from Tomahawk to the County line and is only open to hiking and biking in the summer. In addition, the Grandfather Falls, Harrison Hills, and Underdown segments of the Ice Age trail all traverse through County Forest property. Use has expanded more recently to showshoe and fat bike trails in the winter. A summer use single track bike trail has also been developed from the Underdown to the Merrill Memorial Forest property along with a separate return trail.

D. HORSEBACK RIDING

Horseback riding was only an occasional use in the 1970's. A marked increase has been shown Countywide in private riding stables offering rides at a fee. Use of trails is quite common on the County Forest. The established "Bridle Trail" in the Underdown Recreational Area is being used by local clubs and organized groups for riding events. An 11-site horse trailer camping facility is also available for use at Horseman's Park in the Underdown, although this facility is not exclusive to the horseback riding public.

E. FISHING AND ACCESS TO WATER

Fishing on the Lincoln County Forest has been a traditional use and is likely to continue in the future. Boat accesses have been developed to accommodate fishermen, as well as other recreational water users, and are covered under the Lincoln County Parks and Recreation Ordinance because of their location on County Forest or other County owned land. There are many undeveloped access points to lakes on the County Forest, which are covered under this ordinance as well.

The County Forest has historically been careful not to build excessive water access points to lakes and rivers. Overuse of small lakes and waterways is possible based on County observations. Large watercraft and personal watercraft can be especially damaging to fragile aquatic ecosystems. Future generations of fishermen, waterfowl hunters, and

canoers will benefit from a careful analysis of these sites before any further water access points are developed.

F. HUNTING ACCESS

Another major category of users of the forest is hunters. Whitetail deer, ruffed grouse, bear and turkey hunters make up the majority of hunters. The intensity of habitat management for these species has affected timber sale design and road density and design. In the mid 1990's, 4 areas were identified on the County Forest for intensive grouse habitat management. As of 2019, three of these units have been completed, and when use determines the need, the fourth unit may be developed.

Historically there has been motorized use by deer hunters, bear hunters and grouse hunters, as well as dog trainers on existing trails. With an increase in road construction came an expansion in the territory or area available to hunt by vehicle. This expansion of vehicle hunting area has increased conflicts between the motorized and non-motorized hunter.

G. ACCESS PROBLEMS AND AN ORDINANCE

As more roads were built and the growth of recreation use became apparent, the conflicts began to increase. In 1959 a "County Forest Ordinance" was adopted which, in part, helped regulate the use of County Forest roads and fire lanes. In 1980 a "Forest and Parks Ordinance" was established. A portion of the ordinance allows penalties in the form of forfeiture for misuse of forest roads or recreational trails that are regulated in some form by the Forestry Department or Committee.

Gates, berms or rocks and professionally manufactured signs have been erected on trails that are most susceptible to road damage. Water bars were constructed on erodible soils with steep slopes. These areas had suffered annual damage to the roadbeds by rutting and in some cases erosion. Users recognized immediate improvements to the safety and quality of their trails after gates and water bars protected these routes.

With the decision to close local landfills came another use of forest roads, an access to a secluded area to dump household refuse. Many more dumping incidents take place than are caught and fined. Illegal dumping may continue to occur as long as it is cheaper to do so than to pay for removal of refuse from the home or business.

The Forestry Office allows for gathering firewood, by permit, from recent cut areas if appropriate. Roads are stabilized and closed off to public road travel as needed to protect the resource.

The two ordinances mentioned above were effective as a County wide policy to a point, but damage to the forest continued to be a problem in certain, especially in sensitive areas. The ability of the forestry personnel to enforce road regulations for the protection of the County Forest and its users was a problem because staff time could not be assigned to these issues on a full-time basis. The Recreation Officer Position was created in 2008 and has been very successful in providing focused law enforcement on these resource related issues.

H. COUNTY FOREST ROAD DEVELOPMENT

In the 1970's the state funded a "County Forest Road" system at \$100/mile (per s. 86.315 (4)(a), Wis. Stats.). The County manages a limited number of miles in this system primarily for timber management, fire control and recreational use.

When the state withdrew funding through the Department of Transportation for this system, the County Forest Road system suffered. The Wisconsin County Forest Association (WCFA) began to work for the re-establishment of funds and succeeded in restoring the County Forest Road Aids program in 1988 at the rate of \$200/mile.

In 1999, funds were raised to approximately \$335 per mile, although most years this amount is prorated. The 2019 County Forest Road mileage is 27.25 miles. Additional mileage will be added as deemed necessary.

I. COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP ACCESS

County

All timber sales requiring new road access onto County Highways will require joint approval by the County Forest Administrator and the County Highway Commissioner. A temporary easement permit is required from the County Highway Commissioner.

Townships

All timber sales with new access onto Town Highways will require joint approval by the County Forest Administrator and the appropriate Town Officials.

J. SUMMARY

The history of access on the County Forest has moved from limited access to increased access by logging roads, to the overuse and destruction of certain logging roads and sensitive areas by recreational users being in the wrong location.

Access to the Forest became necessary to reach timber sales and remove forest products. Today, the road system and the use of these roads for other motorized and non-motorized uses have grown.

The soils of Lincoln County are principally the result of weathering of glacial deposits. Considerable variation occurs in soil types within short distances. Soil types, steepness, length and shape of slopes, and the general pattern of drainage must be considered when designing access routes and trails as well as the use, amount of traffic, type of traffic etc. It is possible to design and maintain roads on erodible soils with steeper slopes but more care must be taken in the development process of these access points and more maintenance costs can be expected.

The resulting problems with increased access became very evident in the 1990's and led to development of this policy attempting to deal with these situations. Regulating access in some blocks has helped to provide a clear and concise direction for planning within the block.

Timber sales, snowmobile trails, ATV/UTV trails, no vehicle areas, primary County Forest roads, fire lanes, cross-country ski trails, trapping, horseback riding, hiking,

mountain/fat-tire biking, snowshoeing, hunting, fishing, and others are all legitimate uses of public land affected by roads and access.

The preparation of this plan is hoped to change the management of access from the 1980 and 1990's user-conflict management to a "Balanced Use Management" of access to the Forest, which is also environmentally friendly. Many cooperators such as the Lincoln County Snowmobile Council, Lincoln County Sportsman's Club, Ruffed Grouse Society, ATV clubs, logging contractors, cross-country ski clubs, mountain bikers, snowshoe enthusiasts, horseback riders and Ice Age Trail organizations have worked with the forestry staff in the past to attempt this multiple use balance on the County Forest. This list of cooperators will no doubt grow in the future with increased use of the Forest.

The benefactors of proper management will be the environment as well as the people who use the Forest. The fieldwork may be the simple part of the management process. Education of the public users as well enforcement of laws and ordinances will be difficult tasks to ensure that everyone's ability to enjoy the Forest is protected for the future.

DEFINITION CHAPTER

All -Terrain Vehicle (ATV)- As defined in s. 340.01 (2g), Wis. Stats.

All -Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Route- A highway or sidewalk designated for use by all-terrain vehicle operators by the governmental agency having jurisdiction as authorized by s. 23.33, Wis. Stats.

All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Trail- A marked corridor on public property or on private lands subject to public easement or lease, designated for use by all-terrain vehicle operators by the governmental agency having jurisdiction, but excluding roadways of highways except those roadways which are not seasonally maintained for motor vehicle traffic or are designated as ATV routes.

County Forest- Those lands owned by Lincoln County and entered under the County Forest Law s. 28.11, Wis. Stats., either as Forest Lands or as Special Use Designated Lands.

Closed Road or Trail- A road or trail will be considered closed to motorized vehicles when designated by the presence of gates, signs, rocks, earthen berms, or any other device placed by the County for the purpose of blocking a road.

Cross Country Travel- Any travel through the County Forest that is not on primary or secondary roads.

Damage- Any occurrence on the landscape that is detrimental or could have a potentially detrimental effect on the natural resources of the County Forest as determined by the Lincoln County Forestry Department.

Designated Trail- A trail signed for a specific recreational activity that has been approved for that use by the Lincoln County Forestry, Land and Parks Committee.

Highway Licensed Vehicle- Any motorized vehicle which is licensed for use on public highways or is intended to be licensed for such use. These vehicles are allowed on primary roads, secondary roads that are opened to their use, and parking areas except when such facilities are closed.

Hunter Walking Trail- A closed road or trail that is managed to provide access for traditional, non-motorized hunting. Management may include seeding or mowing of roads and trails, planning cutting schemes to diversify timber age classes and designing loop-type trail systems.

Motorized Vehicle-Any vehicle, including a combination of 2 or more vehicles or an articulated vehicle, which is self-propelled, except a vehicle operated exclusively on a rail.

Non-motorized- Use of a motor-powered vehicle is prohibited other than when engaged in management activities or contract operations authorized by the Forestry Department.

Off-Road Vehicle- Any motorized vehicle designed or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other terrain, which would include, but not be limited to, such vehicles as four-wheel drive units, dune buggies, all-terrain vehicles, motorcycles, motorbikes, snowmobiles, amphibious vehicles, air-cushioned vehicles, air boats, and golf carts. (Motorbikes which are not highway licensed are not allowed on the County Forest).

Official Snowmobile and Winter All-Terrain Vehicle Trail Closing- That date and time selected and announced by the County Snowmobile Coordinator designating that the approved trails are closed for snowmobile and/or winter all-terrain vehicle use. Trails may not remain open later than March 31.

Official Snowmobile and Winter All-Terrain Vehicle Trail Opening- That date and time selected and announced by the County Snowmobile Coordinator designating that the approved trails are opened for snowmobile and/or winter all-terrain vehicle use. Winter ATV trails may be opened for use one week after the official opening of the state-funded snowmobile trail system and close when the temperature on the trail at a point four feet above the trail surface is 28 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Trails may not be opened earlier than Dec. 1.

Official Summer All-Terrain Vehicle Trail Closing- Summer all-terrain vehicle trails are closed from Dec. 1 to May 1 or when posted closed. Closed periods may be extended due to conditions that could cause damage or present a safety hazard.

Primary Roads- Roads which are constructed and maintained according to County Forest road standards and are eligible for County Forest road aid payments. These roads must be designated as a snowmobile or ATV route to be open for snowmobile or ATV use.

Quiet Area- An area that is managed for minimal motorized travel.

Secondary Roads- Roads or woods trails which have been approved by the Lincoln County Forestry, Land and Parks Department; are not eligible for county forest road aid payments; have been developed primarily for use in the management and protection of the forest or for recreational use and receive maintenance or improvements periodically by the County Forestry staff or its agents.

Snowmobile- As defined in s. 340.01 (58a), Wis. Stats.

Snowmobile or All-Terrain Vehicle Coordinator- The County Forest Administrator, his/her assistant or assistants and such other individuals designated by the Forestry, Land and Parks Committee.

Snowmobile Route- A highway or sidewalk designated for use by snowmobile operators by the governmental agency having jurisdiction as authorized by s. 350.04, Wis. Stats.

Snowmobile Trail- A marked corridor on public property or on private lands subject to public easement or lease, designated for use by operators of snowmobiles by the County Snowmobile Coordinator, but excluding highways, except those highways on which the roadway is not normally maintained for other vehicular traffic by the removal of snow or are designated as snowmobile routes.

Utility Terrain Vehicle- As defined in s. 23.33 (1) (ng), Wis. Stats.

SIGNAGE CHAPTER

This chapter is to provide guidance to the Lincoln County Forestry Department and to user groups of the County Forest, as to how signing shall take place on recreational trails so that a safe and uniform policy is in effect between all user groups throughout the Forest. When possible, the Lincoln County Forestry Department and user groups may reroute recreational trails off County timber sales when active harvesting or trucking of forest products is occurring. The DNR Handbook for signing, and each individual user groups' formal agreement with Lincoln County shall be consulted for trail signing guidelines. All trails on the Lincoln County Forest shall conform to State Statute requirements.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Except for informational and guide signs, all trail signs should be fully reflectorized if trail use is possible at night.
2. No trail sign should be placed more than 6 feet from the edge of the trail.
3. Place signs and posts carefully with regard to anticipated speed, brush line, trail curves, and line of sight.
4. Place trail signs to the right of the trail, when possible, to conform with the user's familiarity with the placement of highway signs.
5. If 2 signs are placed on one post, place the sign with the more important message on top. Stop signs always convey the most important message.

6. For seasonal trails or special events, when practical erect signs as close to the trail opening date or day of the event as possible and remove promptly at the end of the season or event. This reduces vandalism, reduces potential trespass and conserves sign life by reducing exposure to the elements.
7. Use adequately sized wood or metal sign posts to provide stability and deter vandalism.
8. Posts will be used for proper placement of regulatory, caution and stop signs.
9. Trail signing should be done by a small group of people familiar with trail signing guidelines to retain as much uniformity as possible.
10. Avoid overuse of signs. Only trail signs meeting standards for shape, color, size and reflectorization are allowed on trails. This avoids clutter and confusion.
11. If the Lincoln County Forestry Department and the respective user group allows, informational signs may be placed on the trail by trailside businesses, but these signs must conform to the standards for erection, color and shape (brown with white letters).
12. Extra signs should be carried with the grooming and maintenance equipment and trail patrols so that missing or vandalized signs can be quickly replaced.
13. Professional, positive signing techniques should be used.
14. Establish GPS points for emergency situations.
15. Trail etiquette user signs shall be appropriate for all user groups.
16. Signs placed on snowmobile/ATV trails must conform to state standards and be approved by the committee.
17. All authorized signs shall be protected by ordinance from being damaged, defaced, obstructed, removed, or possessed by unauthorized persons.
18. All unauthorized signs will be removed by the Forestry staff. No compensation will be afforded for loss or damage to signs during removal. Individuals erecting unauthorized signs may be prosecuted under s. 943.13(3), Wis. Stats.

EDUCATION CHAPTER

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this chapter are to inform the public where the Lincoln County Forest Access Plan can be found for study or review and where supporting material from the plan can be found. It will also inform the public in regard to educational opportunities offered by different organizations and the Lincoln County Forestry Department.

Education will play a significant part in making the Lincoln County Access plan a success, with the ultimate goal of protecting the resource and reducing user conflict. The Lincoln County Forestry Department along with other organizations such as the ATV/UTV Clubs, Sportsman's Club, Snowmobile Clubs, Mountain Bike Club, Cross-Country Ski Groups, and the Equestrian Club recognize that it is necessary to educate and inform not only the general public, but their own members as well about the value and importance of our County Forest. It is also important that these organizations help promote the different educational courses that are available such as ATV/UTV safety courses, boat safety courses, snowmobile safety courses, and hunters education. These courses not only teach students about the safety issues involved in their particular activities but also teach them about land ethics and the responsible use of the resources.

The Lincoln County Forestry Department may also set up educational workshops or attend user club meetings to provide information pertaining to forest management, recreational use, invasive species and other topics of interest. The Forestry Department feels this would be an excellent opportunity to involve the public in forestry activities. This will enable a better understanding of what is necessary to manage a forest properly and the planning processes that are involved.

Along with the published information about the Access Plan within this chapter, the Lincoln County Forestry Department and Club members will use professional signing techniques to help inform individuals of trail uses, potential hazards, and topics of interest. Public Service announcements along with the Lincoln County web site may be used to inform the public of trail openings and closings.

Public notification of events occurring on County Forestland will be the responsibility of the Club hosting the event. The Lincoln County Forestry Department must be made

aware of all events, and will be able to give interested parties the appropriate contact to obtain information regarding the event.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CHAPTER

A. OBJECTIVES

1. Protect the public, employees, natural resources, and property under the jurisdiction of the Lincoln County Forestry Department.
2. Investigate and enforce applicable laws and regulations which affect the Lincoln County Forest.
3. Prevent criminal violations through informing and educating visitors and users of applicable laws and regulations.

This chapter covers some of the key aspects for law enforcement on the County Forest. These include citizen involvement, the role of a Recreation Officer, Forestry Staff, Sheriff's Department and Warden's role in law enforcement on the County Forest, and the use of surveillance cameras.

B. CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Citizens can independently report violations directly to the Forestry Department at 715-539-1034, the Sheriff's Office at 715-536-6272 or anonymously through Crime Stoppers of Lincoln County at 715-536-3726.

The ATV Trail Ambassador Program

- A Trail Ambassador is a volunteer trail patroller. This person is trained through The Ride Smart Program under NOVICE™, a nonprofit organization, to help ATV/UTV's while riding on the trail. Trail Ambassadors are trained to act as role models for other ATV/UTV's to follow, distribute regulations & information, assist stranded ATV/UTV's and report violations if problems

cannot be addressed through on-site education. The Trail Ambassador is a “police yourself” tool that is widely used in other community projects. The volunteers have no law enforcement authority. Although Trail Ambassadors will wear identification that makes them highly visible, the identifying vests are used as a visible deterrence and for recognition only.

Crime Stoppers

- Crime Stoppers is a program which involves the public, the media and the police in a fight against crime. It offers anonymity and cash rewards to persons who furnish information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons who may or are about to commit a crime. Lincoln County Crime Stoppers is a nonprofit organization which was founded in 1997 and is funded through the public and through fundraising efforts. It is one of many Crime Stoppers programs throughout Wisconsin and nationally. The Board of Directors is comprised of concerned citizens who oversee the operation of the program. Their responsibility included establishing policy, raising funds and controlling the amount of reward payments.

Other Efforts

- Other user groups could develop similar programs to help deter illegal activities and educate the public if they are interested. Two well-known examples of this type of volunteer effort are the Neighborhood Watch and Wisconsin's Sturgeon Patrol. Other "citizen watch" programs have shown significant increases in compliance and reductions in complaints and localized problems.

C. RECREATION OFFICER

The recreation officer position is a full time, certified Sheriff's Deputy that was established in 2008 and is dedicated to the enforcement of resource related laws and

ordinances on the county forest. This position is able to work odd hours and weekends to address illegal activities and vandalism that occur to help alleviate these problems. This position has made Lincoln County a more desirable place to recreate and has helped preserve our valuable resources so future generations can enjoy the same opportunities that we have today.

Purpose of Position

Persons in this classification protect life and property enforces Federal, State laws, county laws and ordinances specifically related to use of county lands and waterways, as well as those duties normally assigned a Deputy Sheriff. The work is performed under the direction of an assigned Patrol Lieutenant and in cooperation with the Forestry Department Administrator, and the general supervision of the Lincoln County Sheriff and Chief Deputy.

General Duties

A person in this position enforces all Federal, State and local laws regarding criminal, Lincoln County Forest and Recreational Trail ordinances, Parks and Recreational ordinances, snowmobile, ATV and boating regulations and traffic incidents. This person is also responsible for the investigation and management of crime scenes related to this assignment. This is a law enforcement position with full arrest powers. Work is performed in accordance with prescribed regulations, Sheriff's Office policies and procedures and Civil Service Rules. His/her work is reviewed by a supervisor through conferences, reports and performance reviews. When the Recreational Officer is off duty, calls and complaints related to this position will be initially taken by regular Patrol Deputies and then turned over to the Recreation Officer for follow up action.

This position description should not be interpreted as all-inclusive. It is intended to identify the major responsibilities and requirements of this job. The Recreational Officer/Deputy Sheriff may be requested to perform job-related responsibilities and tasks other than those stated in this description.

**D. THE SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT AND DNR CONSERVATION
WARDEN’S ROLE**

The DNR Conservation Warden is primarily responsible for enforcing State regulations. They do not have jurisdiction to enforce County Ordinances. Often times they will work closely together with the Sheriff’s Department to report violations of County Ordinances when enforcing State Statutes.

The following is an explanation from Curt Butler, Conservation Warden for Lincoln County, on his role in working with the Sheriff’s Department on County law enforcement issues:

“Conservation Wardens have statutory authority to enforce State laws relating to hunting, fishing, snowmobile, ATV/UTV, boating, and environmental protection on all properties within the State. For recreational vehicles, I can enforce such things as helmet laws, registration, age restrictions, equipment violations, intoxicated use, reckless operation, and trespass to private land. I cannot enforce local ordinances such as speed ordinances or trespass onto County land. This enforcement authority does not apply to such things as go-karts, because they are not regulated by the DNR.

Wardens may also act on specific requests from local law enforcement, if we see a crime in our presence, or for any violation on State owned lands. If I saw someone traveling off the trail in a restricted area in violation of the County Ordinance, I could notify the Sheriff’s Office and they could request me to take action. If I saw someone intentionally damaging property, I could take action as that is a crime.

The Sheriff’s Department can enforce all of the same laws that I do, as well as locally adopted ordinances. The Sheriff’s Office would be the enforcement agency for any ordinance violations on County lands.

Wardens often work together with local law enforcement on related issues. If I see a violation of a County Ordinance or violation for which I do not have direct enforcement authority, I can take down information and refer it to a deputy for follow-up. Likewise, the Sheriff’s Office can and does refer things to me.

In the event of organized recreational patrol by the Sheriff's Department, I could and would assist and participate.”

E. FORESTRY, LAND & PARKS STAFF

The role of the Forestry, Land & Parks staff is to assist and support all aspects of enforcement on the County Forest. In many cases, staff may be in the position to identify enforcement issues and take necessary steps to correct these problems. If a violation of a County Ordinance is observed, pertinent information is recorded and reported to the Recreation Officer. If a private citizen observes and reports a violation, staff will assist with or forward a complaint to Recreation Officer for enforcement. Staff and Rec. Officer will follow through with tips provided by citizens that may result in the issuance of a citation for violations of County Ordinances.

F. SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

The use of surveillance cameras on the County Forest has been successful in reducing both timber theft and vandalism. Cameras can be set up in problem areas and then checked periodically. Some of the limitations of the cameras are their ability to work at night and damage or theft of the camera itself if it is discovered.

FUNDING CHAPTER

This chapter contains important information in regard to maintaining and enhancing access, wildlife habitat, timber harvest, resource protection, and recreation on the Lincoln County Forest. Many sources of revenue are potentially available to Lincoln County and the citizens who use the County Forest. Major funding sources that have been identified are donations from clubs and users, user fees, State and Federal aids and grants, patrol programs, tax levy, and revenue from the sale of timber from the County Forest. It may also be possible to use funds raised from other sources to maintain and establish new trails and facilities. Raising these funds would give diverse groups an opportunity to

work together and foster mutual respect and understanding with one another. Additional fundraising opportunities could include items such as raffles, sales of memberships, etc. This, as all parts of this plan, is evolving. As new issues arise and new funding sources become available, they can be added to our list of funding possibilities. It is recommended that whenever possible, multiple grant sources should be used to stretch the dollars and not deplete one source in favor of another.

REVIEW PROCESS CHAPTER

The objective of this Chapter is to provide a road map for periodic review of access and resource issues that have an impact on the Lincoln County Forest. It is recognized that these issues are not static, and as new ideas and concerns arise, it is prudent to study the outcome they may have on our County Forest. From this study, we can recommend procedures that will enhance the Forest resources that we all depend on for material and recreational use.

I. APPROVAL OF LINCOLN COUNTY FOREST ACCESS PLAN

The Lincoln County Forest Access Plan was approved by the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors on May 18, 2004 per Resolution 2004-03-11. Review of this plan is done periodically as new 5-Year Outdoor Recreation Plans and 15 Year County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plans are adopted, and as otherwise needed.

II. ONGOING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Lincoln County, along with the Citizen's Advisory Group, used a great deal of public input in the process of developing an Access Plan for the Lincoln County Forest. The intention of the Citizen's Advisory Group was to promote awareness of conflicts and reduce and resolve these conflicts. Ongoing cooperation, respect for other users, along with public involvement is essential in making the Access Plan a good working document.

Various User Groups of the forest may meet periodically if necessary to address conflicts that occur, and review the plan's success. The Forest Administrator is available when issues need to be resolved, and Forestry Committee meetings are open to the public. Additional public comment and updates on access issues are taken into account during subsequent Five Year Outdoor Recreational Plans and Fifteen Year County Forest Plan updates as well.

III. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

All User Groups desire access to the County Forest while protecting the natural resource. Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices (BMP's) for Water Quality and Invasive Species are designed to help loggers, landowners, land managers, and land users to be good stewards of the County Forest. The Citizen's Advisory Group incorporated BMP's into the planning process of the Access Policy. Forestry, water, soils, wildlife and recreation are all considerations in forest management. The Forestry Department and the Department of Natural Resources will work together to provide an environmental analysis to evaluate probable environmental effects that various uses may have on the resources of the Lincoln County Forest.

IV. ORGANIZED USER GROUPS LAND USE AGREEMENTS

Each organized User Group with a designated trail designed for their use may complete a formal Land Use Agreement or Contract. These Land Use Agreements or Contracts are subject to change. For organized events, proof of insurance must be provided to the Lincoln County Forestry Department.

LINCOLN COUNTY FOREST BLOCK NARRATIVES AND GOALS

BLOCK MAPS ARE COMPILED IN CHAPTER 3000.

HARRISON BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 26,360 acres of county forestland and includes 319 acres of special use county land referred to as the Wirth property. Mixed hardwood-white birch-oak stands (51%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by aspen (24%), black spruce/tamarack (7%), swamp hardwood (2%), tag alder (2%), and red pine (1%). The remaining 3% of this tract is primarily composed of lowland marsh, grass, upland brush, and fir-spruce types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity. The primary management objectives for this property are to expand the aspen cover type for diversity and wildlife habitat enhancement and to develop high quality hardwood stands for timber production. Other primary considerations when managing timber on this block are BMP's and protecting water quality, controlling invasive species, preventing erosion on steep slopes, and aesthetics.

The topography in this block ranges from nearly level to very steep. This unit is comprised primarily of the Saron-Keweenaw-Goodman soil association, which consists of well-drained loamy and silty soils on terminal and recessional end moraines. The end moraines have the highest elevations and some of the roughest terrain in the county. In most areas the swells, hills, and ridges are interspersed with many small kettles and lake basins and a few narrow drainage valleys. Many of the kettles and lake basins contain lakes, ponds, bogs or swamps. Slopes are mostly short and complex. A minor secondary type in the northeast part of this block is the Pence-Padus-Antigo soil association. This type consists mostly of soils in outwash areas that are made up of knolls, swells, hills and ridges and are characterized by undulating to hilly topography. The landscape includes some small, nearly level, rather flat outwash plains that are pitted with kettles. The terrain also contains basins and drainageways. Many of the depressional areas contain lakes, streams, ponds, bogs or swamps. Slopes range from nearly level and smooth to very steep and complex.

The main concern for managing access on this block is the potential for erosion on steep slopes. Forest roads and recreational trails must be located to follow natural contours and to minimize cuts and fills. Drainage structures such as pipe culverts or water bars may be necessary to prevent erosion and protect water quality, especially on long steep grades. Soil stabilization

methods such as seeding or installing sediment control structures may be needed on newly constructed roads or trails and existing routes must be well maintained or water quality protection structures may quickly degrade. Inactive roads could be closed to help protect the road surface and the water quality protection structures.

The Big Pine Creek, Little Pine Creek, Green Meadow Creek and Pepper Creek are present on this block. Many small pothole lakes are also scattered across the landscape in this unit.

Fifteen geographic sections of this block are named as having the general location of a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community. These were identified in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) generated by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 8/29/2019.

This unit encounters a wide range of recreational use throughout the year. Among these uses are hunting; sightseers; funded and non-funded snowmobile and winter ATV trails (corridor 15, 16, trail J and Otter Lake trail); the counties only summer-use ATV trail; Harrison Ice Age Trail segment; and the Otter Lake park, campground and nature trail. In addition, the county maintains 21 formal boat landings to give access to the water resources for fishing or other recreational uses. Many informal access points to water also exist. An expansion of 3.4 miles of summer-use ATV/UTV trail was completed in this unit in 2017. Motorized travel, hunting or trapping is not allowed north of Bear Trail Road on the special –use Wirth property.

HARRISON BLOCK GOALS

- *Develop a hiking trail around Roothouse Lake on the Wirth Property.
- *Maintain quiet area on Wirth Property and surrounding area.
- *Expand the Turtle Lake Road ATV parking Lot.
- *Possible larger turnaround on north end of Town Hall Road.
- *Rough campground by CTH B South ATV parking lot.
- *Open Cinder Road to ATV traffic from Hwy 17 to Parish Road.
- *Camping shelter on the Ice Age Trail in Harrison Hills, possibly at Bus Lake.
- *Backcountry trail system around the lakes of Beaver Trail Road and Ski Hill Road for biking, hiking, paddle portage, snowshoe and backcountry ski.

HIGHWAY 8 BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 6940 acres of county forestland. Aspen stands (37%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by Mixed hardwood-White Birch-Hemlock and Hardwood (18%), tag alder (11%), tamarack/black spruce (17%), pine (6%), and swamp hardwood (2%). The remaining 9% of this tract is primarily composed of lowland marsh, grass and fir-spruce types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity. The primary management objectives for this property are to establish more of the pine cover type and to perpetuate the white birch cover type since this is a diminishing species on the landscape.

The topography in this unit has little local relief and few areas of surface water, except for several small streams. The terrain features are generally linear and orientated from northwest to southeast. The elongated or oval drumlins and moraines are separated by long, shallow drainage valleys that contain swamps and bogs which are only slightly lower in elevation than the crests of the moraines and drumlins. The upland ridges have broad crests and gentle slopes. This unit is comprised primarily of the Croswood-Lupton-Augwood soil association, which consists of moderately well drained, very poorly drained and somewhat poorly drained, nearly level and gently sloping, sandy and mucky soils on outwash-veneered moraines and drumlins. A minor secondary type in this block is the Sarwet-Moodig-Lupton association. This type consists of moderately well drained, somewhat poorly drained, and very poorly drained, nearly level and gently sloping, loamy and mucky soils on moraines and drumlins.

The main concern for managing access on this block is the potential for rutting on unimproved roads. Many of the logging roads can be rutted by heavy vehicles because of wetness. During dry periods, loose sand can interfere with the traction of wheeled equipment on some soils. Most public roads require graveling and maintenance in order to make them accessible to passenger vehicle traffic during rainy periods.

The Johnson Creek and Hay Creek are present on this block.

Four geographic sections of this block are named as having the general location of a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community. These were identified

in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) generated by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 8/29/2019.

The major recreational use in this area consists of large and small game hunting which includes ruffed grouse, whitetail deer and black bear. Late summer and fall are when this unit encounters its greatest use. In addition, a non-funded snowmobile trail (trail 8) travels through the north end of this block.

HIGHWAY 8 BLOCK GOALS

*Where appropriate, secondary roads should be improved to a suitable point off primary roads with parking areas and then opened to motorized use. Beyond these points, it will be non-motorized thus creating a quiet area.

HIGHWAY T BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 14,320 acres of county forestland. Aspen stands (53%) make up the majority of this block, followed by tag alder (18%), black spruce/tamarack (17%), northern hardwoods (5%), keg-lowland marsh (2%), and pine types (1%). The remaining 4% of this tract is primarily composed of swamp hardwood, upland brush, fir-spruce and grass. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity. The primary management objective for this property is to maintain the aspen cover type for timber production and wildlife habitat enhancement. Another major consideration when managing timber on this block is to perpetuate green cover for wildlife and to sustain the many wetlands which are present in this area.

The topography on this block is nearly level and gently sloping. The western portion of this unit is comprised primarily of the Magnor-Lupton-Capitola soil association and the eastern section is predominantly made up of the Sarwet-Moodig-Lupton soil association. The Ossmer-Minocqua-Sconsin and the Croswood-Lupton-Augwood soil associations are also minor soil associations in this block. These types are moderately well drained, somewhat poorly drained and very poorly drained loamy and mucky soils on moraines, drumlins and outwash plains. They are mainly characterized by low recessional moraines and drumlins intermingled with swamps and bogs. The landscape has little local relief and few areas of surface water, except for small streams in

the valleys. The swamps and bogs are only slightly lower in elevation than the crests of the moraines and drumlins. The landscape features are linear in the drumlin areas and are oriented from northwest to southeast. The drumlins have broad crests and gentle slopes. Many of the upland areas have a thin surface veneer of glacial outwash deposits. These glacial meltwater deposits are thicker on the foot slopes that border the swamps and bogs. Slopes are mostly long and smooth.

The main concern for managing access on this block is the potential of rutting on unimproved roads because of low soil strength and wetness. Erosion can also be a concern in areas where the slope is more than 2%. During dry periods, loose sand can interfere with the traction of wheeled equipment or be subject to blowing on certain soil types. Public roads may require graveling and maintenance in order to make them accessible to passenger vehicle traffic during wet periods.

The Landwehr Creek, Squaw Creek, Papoose Creek and the Flanigan Creek are present on this block.

Twelve geographic sections of this block are named as having the general location of a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community. These were identified in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) generated by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 8/29/2019.

The major recreational use in this area consists of large and small game hunting which includes ruffed grouse, whitetail deer and black bear. Late summer and fall are when this unit encounters its greatest use. In addition, two state-funded snowmobile trails (corridor 19 and trail 86) travel through this block.

HIGHWAY T BLOCK GOALS

- *Work with Spirit Valley Riders ATV Club to create an ATV trail to Tripoli gas station.
- *Work with Somo Area ATV/UTV Club to develop loop type trail south of Pine Tree Lane and west of Wilson School Road.

MAIL ROUTE BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 4,430 acres of county forestland that includes 120 acres of non-County Forest Crop property being utilized by the county as a gravel pit. Aspen stands (40%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by mixed hardwood-oak-white birch (22%), black spruce/tamarack (8%), keg-lowland marsh (5%), tag alder (2%) and red pine-white pine (2%). The remaining 21% of this tract are primarily composed of upland brush, grass and swamp hardwood. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity. The primary management objective for this property is to expand the aspen cover type for wildlife habitat enhancement and timber production. A secondary objective is to maintain an intermingling of quality hardwood stands throughout this tract for timber production and cover-type diversity. The western portion of this block has been developed into one of the county's ruffed grouse management units.

The topography in this block ranges from nearly level to very steep. The western portion of this unit is comprised primarily of the Vilas-Sayner-Keweenaw soil association, which consists of excessively drained and well-drained sandy and loamy soils on outwash plains and moraines. This association is composed mostly of soils that formed in ridges of glacial drift deposited along the edge of a glacier that was retreating downslope to the northwest. The ridges of drift are fronted by areas of outwash and contain knolls, hills, and ridges of glacial outwash interspersed with morainic uplands. The outwash was most likely deposited by meltwater flowing southwest along the margin of the glacial ice. Areas of this association have a rough, complex topography and contain many small kettles, basins, and narrow drainageways. Many of the depressional areas have no drainage outlet. Slopes are short and complex. During dry periods, loose sand can interfere with the traction of wheeled vehicles on some types of soil in this association. The eastern portion of this block consists exclusively of the Pence-Padus-Antigo soil association, which are well-drained loamy and silty soils on outwash plains. This association consists mostly of soils in outwash areas that are made up of knolls, swells, hills, and ridges and are characterized by undulating to hilly topography. The landscape includes some small, nearly level, rather flat outwash plains that are pitted with kettles. The terrain also contains basins and drainageways. Many of the depressional areas contain lakes, streams, ponds, bogs, or swamps. Slopes range from nearly level and smooth to very steep and complex.

The main concern for managing access on this block is the potential for erosion on steep slopes. Sandy soils are especially prone to this risk. Forest roads and recreational trails must be located to follow natural contours and to minimize cuts and fills. Drainage structures such as pipe culverts or water bars may be necessary in some of the more poorly drained soils to prevent erosion and protect water quality. Soil stabilization methods such as seeding or installing sediment control structures may also be needed on newly constructed roads or trails and existing routes must be well maintained or water quality protection structures may quickly degrade. Inactive roads could be closed to help protect the road surface and the water quality protection structures. Plans currently exist on this block to provide for motorized access on a few designated secondary roads to give access to water or into the interior of this unit, and close the remaining roads to motorized travel and maintain these routes as hunter walking trails.

The Harrison Flowage and several branches of the Pine Creek are present on this block. A number of small lakes are also scattered across the landscape in this unit.

There are no geographic sections of this block as being named as having the general location of a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community. These were identified in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) generated by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 8/29/2019.

The major recreational use in this area consists of large and small game hunting, especially ruffed grouse. Late summer and fall are when this unit encounters its greatest use. The county maintains one formal boat landing to give access to the Harrison Flowage for fishing or other recreational uses. A second access point is being planned for this unit in the near future.

MAIL ROUTE BLOCK GOALS

- *Maintain ruffed grouse hunter walking trails on the western portion of this block.
- *A quiet area will be maintained in this block, as only limited motorized use will be allowed.
- *Explore the potential to develop an ATV intensive use area in Theis Pit that connects to the Harrison Hills ATV trail system after this area no longer functions as an active gravel pit.

NEW WOOD BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 30,690 acres of county forestland. Aspen stands (51%) make up the majority of this block, followed by mixed hardwood-oak-white birch (17%), tag alder (15%), and swamp conifer types (11%). The remaining 6% of this tract is primarily composed of swamp hardwood, fir-spruce, white pine, upland brush, grass, and lowland marsh types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity. The primary management objective for this property is to maintain large blocks of the aspen cover type for timber production and wildlife habitat management. A secondary objective is to develop an intermingling of quality hardwood stands throughout this tract for timber production and cover-type diversity. Another major consideration when managing timber in this block is to perpetuate green cover for wildlife habitat enhancement. The southwest and northwest portion of this region contains two of the counties four ruffed grouse management areas (8600 acres). These areas are still in the planning stage and are currently not completely closed to public motorized travel.

The topography in this unit is mostly flat, except for a few morainic mounds that protrude slightly higher than the level of the plain. Depressional areas, such as drainageways and basins, are common throughout the outwash plain. Streams, lakes, swamps, bogs, and marshes make up these lower features. This unit is comprised primarily of the Magnor-Lupton-Capitola soil association, which consists of somewhat poorly drained and very poorly drained, nearly level and gently sloping, silty and mucky soils on moraines and drumlins.

The main concern for managing access on this block is the potential for rutting on unimproved roads. Many of the logging trails can be rutted by heavy vehicles because of wetness. Public roads require graveling and maintenance in order to make them accessible to passenger vehicle traffic during rainy periods.

The Averill Creek, New Wood River, Kelly Creek, Woodrow Creek, Camp Twenty-six Creek, Alery Creek, Armstrong Creek, Coffee Creek, and the Spirit River are present on this block. In addition, the Coffee Creek, Camp Twenty-six Creek and Morrison Lake Flowages are maintained for waterfowl habitat.

Twenty-two geographic sections of this block are named as having the general location of a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community. These were identified in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) generated by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 8/29/2019.

The major recreational use in this area consists of large and small game hunting which include ruffed grouse, whitetail deer and black bear. Late summer and fall are when this unit encounters its greatest use. In addition, a major north-south snowmobile and winter ATV trail (corridor 19) travels through this block.

NEW WOOD BLOCK CONDITIONS

- *Conduct trail rehabilitation and gate Snowmobile trail west of Swamp Road to enhance snowmobile and winter ATV use on Corridor 19.
- *Maintain ruffed grouse hunter walking trails on this block.
- *Snowmobile trail from CTH E to Swamp Road developed and opened for ATV use (gated on ends) from May 1 to December 1 unless posted closed.

PINE TREE BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 5130 acres of county forestland. Aspen stands (35%) make up the majority of this block, followed by pine (30%), tag alder (15%), black spruce/tamarack (5%), keg (4%) and swamp hardwood (3%). The remaining 8% of this tract is primarily composed of grass, upland brush, fir-spruce and cedar. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity. The primary management objective for this block is to maintain the aspen and pine cover types for timber production and wildlife habitat enhancement. Another major consideration when managing timber on this block is to sustain the many wetlands which are present in this area.

The topography on this block is nearly level and gently sloping. This unit is comprised primarily of the Vilas-Croswell-Markey soil association. It is excessively drained, moderately-well drained, and very poorly drained, nearly level to sloping, sandy and mucky soils on outwash plains. This association consists of soils on outwash plains that have little local relief. The

topography is relatively flat, except for a few morainic mounds that protrude upward, slightly higher than the level of the plain and a long, prominent esker that extends from northwest to southeast along the Somo River. Depressional areas, such as drainageways and basins, are common throughout the outwash plain. Streams, lakes, swamps, bogs, and marshes are in these lower areas. This association contains much of the surface water in the county. Slopes are mostly long and smooth, except for the short slopes adjacent to depressional areas. The Sarwet-Moodig-Lupton and the Croswood-Lupton-Augwood soil associations are also minor soil associations in this block. These types are moderately well drained, somewhat poorly drained and very poorly drained sandy, loamy and mucky soils on moraines, drumlins and outwash plains. They are mainly characterized by low recessional moraines and drumlins intermingled with swamps and bogs. The landscape has little local relief and few areas of surface water, except for small streams in the valleys. The swamps and bogs are only slightly lower in elevation than the crests of the moraines and drumlins. The landscape features are linear in the drumlin areas and are oriented from northwest to southeast. The drumlins have broad crests and gentle slopes. Many of the upland areas have a thin surface veneer of glacial outwash deposits. These glacial meltwater deposits are thicker on the foot slopes that border the swamps and bogs. Slopes are mostly long and smooth.

The main concern for managing access on this block is the potential of rutting on unimproved roads in areas which are poorly drained because of low soil strength and wetness. During dry periods, loose sand can interfere with the traction of wheeled equipment or be subject to blowing on certain soil types. Public roads may require graveling and maintenance in order to make them accessible to passenger vehicle traffic during wet periods.

The Somo River, Landwehr Creek and Somo Lake are present on this block.

Three geographic sections of this block are named as having the general location of a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community. These were identified in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) generated by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 8/29/2019.

The major recreational use in this area consists of large and small game hunting which includes ruffed grouse, whitetail deer and black bear. Late summer and fall are when this unit encounters its greatest use.

PINE TREE LANE BLOCK GOALS

*Work with Somo Area ATV/UTV Club to develop trails to:

- Posey Rapids
- Pine Tree Lane to Posey Rapids Road.
- Short Cut Lane to Posey Rapids Road.

UNDERDOWN BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 8,200 acres of county forestland. Mixed hardwood-white birch stands (42%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by aspen (25%), keg-lowland marsh (16%), tamarack/black spruce (4%), red pine-white pine (2%), fir/white spruce (2%), swamp hardwood (1%) and tag alder (1%). The remaining 7% of this tract are primarily composed of upland brush and grass. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity. The primary management objectives for this property are to develop high quality hardwood stands for timber production and to maintain/expand the current aspen cover type for diversity and wildlife habitat enhancement. Other primary considerations when managing timber on this block are BMP's and protecting water quality, preventing erosion on steep slopes, recreational trails and aesthetics.

The topography in this block ranges from nearly level to very steep. This unit is comprised primarily of the Saron-Keweenaw-Goodman soil association, which consists of well-drained loamy and silty soils on terminal and recessional end moraines. The end moraines have the highest elevations and some of the roughest terrain in the county. In most areas the swells, hills, and ridges are interspersed with many small kettles and lake basins and a few narrow drainage valleys. Many of the kettles and lake basins contain lakes, ponds, bogs or swamps. Slopes are mostly short and complex. A minor secondary type in the northern part of this block is the Lupton-Padwet-Minocqua soil association, which consists of very poorly drained and moderately

well drained, mucky and loamy soils on outwash plains. This type consists mostly of soils in flow channels created by glacial meltwater. It encompasses some of the lowest positions on the landscape and includes small swells, hills, ridges, and flat remnants of outwash plains. Many of the flats border the valley slopes of adjacent uplands. The association also includes some isolated morainic knolls and swells and many streams. The channel floors of the streams are frequently ponded during wet periods. Slopes are generally long and smooth.

The main concern for managing access on this block is the potential for erosion on steep slopes and of overuse from the wide variety of trails present on this block. Forest roads and recreational trails must be located to follow natural contours and to minimize cuts and fills. Drainage structures such as pipe culverts or water bars may be necessary to prevent erosion and protect water quality, especially on long steep grades. Soil stabilization methods such as seeding or installing sediment control structures may be needed on newly constructed roads or trails and existing routes must be well maintained or water quality protection structures may quickly degrade. Inactive roads could be closed to help protect the road surface and the water quality protection structures.

A tributary to the Prairie River is present on this block in addition to many small pothole lakes and kegs.

One geographic section of this block is named as having the general location of a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community. These were identified in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) generated by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 8/29/2019.

This unit encounters year-round recreational use. It has the widest range and experiences the most recreational use of any other part of the county forest. Among these uses are hunting; sightseers; funded snowmobile and winter ATV trails (trail 51); cross-country ski trails; snowshoe trails; Fat-Tire Bike trails; Underdown Ice Age Trail segment; equestrian trails and mountain/single track bike trails and an ATV route. In addition, the county maintains 8 formal boat landings to give access to the water resources for fishing or other recreational uses. Many informal access points to water also exist. This entire unit is also managed as a ruffed grouse management area.

UNDERDOWN BLOCK GOALS

- *Maintain ruffed grouse hunter walking trails on this block.
- *A core area be managed to accommodate future growth in non-motorized recreational activities.
- *A quiet area will be maintained in this block, as only limited motorized use will be allowed.
- *Downhill style bike park in the hills surrounding Anderson Lake.
- *Widening of ski trail to and from Loop Road so that skate ski grooming could be viable and dependable.
- *Bridge from Prairie Dells County Park across the river to existing trails.
- *Prairie Dells trail shelter (Work with City of Merrill to accomplish this on City property).

WILDWOOD BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 4770 acres of county forestland. Mixed hardwood-white birch and hemlock-hardwood stands (37%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by aspen (25%), swamp hardwoods (11%), tag alder (10%) and tamarack/black spruce (8%). The remaining 9% of this tract are primarily composed of white pine, lowland marsh and grass types. Timber harvesting is a significant commercial activity. The primary management objective for this property is to maintain a balance between the hardwood and aspen cover types for timber production and wildlife habitat enhancement. Other primary considerations when managing timber on this block is to perpetuate green cover for wildlife habitat improvement, preserve the swamp hardwood type where possible and propagate low, wet hardwood swales.

The topography in this unit is mostly flat, except for a few morainic mounds that protrude slightly higher than the level of the plain. Depressional features such as drainageways and basins are common throughout the outwash plain and most soils have a high water table. Streams, lakes, swamps, bogs and marshes make up the lower areas. The drainageways are frequently ponded during wet periods. This unit is comprised primarily of the Magnor-Lupton-Capitola soil association, which consists of somewhat poorly drained and very poorly drained, nearly level and gently sloping, silty and mucky soils on moraines and drumlins. The terrain has little local relief and few areas of surface water except for small streams in the valleys. A major secondary type in

this block is the Ossmer-Minocqua-Sconsin soil association. This type consists of somewhat poorly drained, very poorly drained and moderately well drained, nearly level and gently sloping, silty and mucky soils on outwash plains. The outwash plains are in major river valleys that meander through morainic plains. Many streams are in areas of this association.

The main concern for managing access on this block is the potential for rutting on unimproved roads. Many of the logging trails can be rutted by heavy vehicles because of wetness. Public roads require graveling and maintenance in order to make them accessible to passenger vehicle traffic during rainy periods

The Spirit River, New Wood River, Ritchie Creek, and Marheime Creek are present on this block.

There are no geographic sections of this block as being named as having the general location of a threatened, rare or endangered aquatic and/or terrestrial species or natural community. These were identified in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) generated by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 8/29/2019.

The major recreational use in this area consists of large and small game hunting which includes ruffed grouse, whitetail deer and black bear. Late summer and fall are when this unit encounters its greatest use. In addition, a snowmobile/winter ATV trail (trail 86) travels through this block on Wildwood Avenue as well as a connector trail to Taylor County that is maintained by a Taylor County Snowmobile Club.

WILDWOOD BLOCK GOALS

- *Secondary Wildwood Loop developed and open to ATV's from May 1 to March 15, and open to snowmobiles during winter season unless posted closed.
- *A quiet area will be maintained in this block, as only limited motorized use will be allowed.

POTENTIAL GOALS FOR ALL BLOCKS

- *Many of the lakes on the county forest are small and fall under the size allowed for outboard motorized use. Therefore, roads and turnarounds should be no larger than needed to provide for

lightweight boats on small trailers. This refers to small lakes only and is not meant to limit legitimate use of trailers and motors where their use is valid.

*Where appropriate, secondary roads should be improved to a suitable point off primary roads with parking areas and then opened to motorized use. Beyond these points, it will be non-motorized thus creating a quiet area.

*Continue Recreational Officer position.

*Develop designated walk in campsites.

*Create a County trail steward position for non-motorized uses.

*Provide for a balance of legitimate recreational opportunities to a wide variety of diverse groups and reduce user conflict by keeping incompatible uses separate from one another while still protecting the natural resources of the county in a sustainable manner.

*Protect and preserve the environmental integrity of the natural resources in Lincoln County so future generations will have use and enjoyment of our public lands.

*Improve and protect access to water.

*Continue planning and developing recreational facilities to accommodate the elderly and handicapped.