

LINCOLN COUNTY FOREST ACCESS PLAN
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INTRODUCTION CHAPTER

1. PROLOGUE

The Lincoln County Forest was founded in 1935 and presently consists of 100,708 acres. In the 1930's much of these lands had been cut over and 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, 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 all groups 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 in the Access Plan. 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. 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 100,708 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. (§28.11 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.

In the past decade the demand for and harvest 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 written permitted uses (handicapped, firewood, boughs, etc.) are exempt from specific regulations as specified in their respective agreements with Lincoln County.

B. OTHER MOTORIZED VEHICLES

The past decade has experienced a large increase in recreational vehicle users. An increase in snowmobile use was noted as well as the introduction of the ATV to the average income family. ATV use presently is noted on all blocks of the forest. Use ranges from casual riders on secondary roads to off-road uses in the most isolated areas by trappers, deer hunters and bear 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 is open year-round except during the spring when damage could occur due to soft trail conditions.

There are also many miles of snowmobile and winter ATV trails available to use both on and off the County Forest. Dirt bike use is also increasing. The change from present policy to more restrictive use recognizes the potential need to develop ATV trails and use areas in specific locations. Additional development of snowmobile trails is possible. 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. Regulations are needed to restrict such traffic in these locations as well.

C. NON-MOTORIZED USE

Non-motorized users of the existing road network have also increased dramatically. Cross-country skiing, mountain 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.

D. HORSEBACK RIDING

Horseback riding was only an occasional use in the 1970's. The past few years have shown a marked increase 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 occasional 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 appears 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 may 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 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. At the present time, work on these units is underway but has not been completed.

Historically there has been motorized use by deer hunters, bear hunters and grouse hunters, as well as dog trainers on existing trails. With a marked increase in road construction came an expansion in the territory or area available to hunt by vehicle. In recent years 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 firelanes. 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 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 and business refuse. Many more dumping incidents take place than are caught and fined. It appears as though 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 a short period of time for gathering firewood, by permit, from recent cut areas if appropriate. After a period of time for firewood gathering, roads are stabilized and closed off to public road travel as needed to protect the resource.

The two ordinances mentioned above have been effective as a Countywide policy to a point, but damage to the forest continues to be a problem in certain sensitive areas. The ability of the forestry personnel to enforce road regulations for the protection of the County Forest and its users has been a problem because staff time cannot be assigned to these issues on a full time basis.

H. COUNTY FOREST ROAD DEVELOPMENT

In the 1970's the state funded a "County Forest Road" system at \$100/mile (per §86.315 (4)(a)). 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. Since this reinstatement, the Lincoln County Forest has added two major roads; Horn Lake Road and Cinder Road. The 2004 mileage is 27.25 miles. Additional mileage will be added as deemed necessary.

I. COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP ACCESS

County

All new timber sales with 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 logging roads and sensitive areas by recreational users.

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 have become 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 already been established providing a clear and concise direction for planning within the block.

Timber sales, snowmobile trails, ATV trails, no vehicle areas, primary County Forest roads, fire lanes, cross-country ski trails, trapping, horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, 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 and Mountain Bikers, 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 §340.01 (2g), Wis. Stats., means an engine driven device which has a net weight of 900 lbs. or less, which has a width of 48" or less, which is equipped with a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and which is designed to travel on 3 or more low-pressure tires. A low-pressure tire is a tire which has a minimum width of 6", which is designed to be mounted on a rim with a maximum diameter of 12" and which is designed to be inflated with an operating pressure not to exceed 6 lbs. per square inch as recommended by the manufacturer.

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 §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 §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 §340.01 (58a), Wis. Stats. any engine driven vehicle of a type which utilizes sled type runners, skis or an endless belt tread or any combination of these or similar means of contact with the surface upon which it is operated, but does not include such vehicles which are either manually propelled or driven by a motor of 4 horse power or less and operated only on private property.

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 §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.

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 will 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 users 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, 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.

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.

Copies of the finalized Lincoln County Access Plan will be made available at the Merrill and Tomahawk public libraries, DNR offices, County Clerk's office, and the Lincoln County Forestry Department. Along with the plans there will be updated trail maps and brochures available at different locations throughout the County such as the Chamber of Commerce offices, County Extension office, DNR offices, Sheriff's office, Lincoln County Forestry office, and the Lincoln County web site.

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 Trail Ambassadors, Sportsman's Club, Snowmobile Clubs, Mountain Bike Club, Cross-Country Ski Club, 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 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 would also like to set up educational workshops, open to the public, which will provide information pertaining to forest management and timber harvesting. 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, 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.

(These objectives were derived from the USFS Law Enforcement division.)

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

B. CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

The following is a description of the trail ambassador program as described by the Wisconsin DNR. The program is designed for ATV groups working through the DNR's Ride Smart Program. Currently in Lincoln County, the Harrison Hills ATV club is participating in the Trail Ambassador Program. Although this program is designed for ATV groups, other user groups could develop similar programs if they are interested. Citizens can also independently report violations directly to the Forestry Department at 715-536-0327, the Sheriff's Department at 715-536-6272 or anonymously through Crime Stoppers of Lincoln County at 715-536-3726.

The Trail Ambassador Program

What is a "Trail Ambassador?"

- A Trail Ambassador is a volunteer trail patroller. This person is trained through The Ride Smart Program under NOVICE™, a nonprofit organization, to help ATVers while riding on the trail. Trail Ambassadors are trained to act as role models for other ATVers to follow, distribute regulations & information, assist stranded ATVers 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. Two well-known examples of this type of volunteer effort are the Neighborhood Watch and Wisconsin's Sturgeon Watch. Other "citizen watch" programs have shown significant increases in compliance and reductions in complaints and localized problems.

Are Trail Ambassadors law enforcement officers?

- No. 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.

C. RECREATION OFFICER

This is a brief description of the characteristics of a Recreational Officer position if it is established in Lincoln County. This description is based primarily on the experience of Douglas County as reported to the WCFA Recreation Committee on June 26, 2002.

The Recreation Officer position is completely under the authority of the Sheriff's Department. A Recreation Officer is typically furnished with full uniform, a truck and a snowmobile. In Douglas County, Snowmobile and ATV funds pay 60% of the salary; the balance comes from General Revenues. Timber revenues go into the General Fund, so in a round about way, the forestry work does pay for the salary. Douglas County has experienced a reduction in vandalism and timber theft. There now is someone to handle complaints related to easement violations. The offenders are being caught and there is reduced motorized damage. It has not, however, solved all the County's problems.

The deputy is a Recreation Officer, not a Patrol Officer. A County must be careful when selecting the person for this job. What is needed is a person who is good at public relations. This is not a 9 to 5 job. Counties must notify the proper State Officials when they plan to hire someone to fill this position. The Sheriff must file intent to patrol.

Some benefits Douglas County has reported from this position are as follows:

1. Reduced timber theft.
2. Reduced vandalism to park facilities.
3. Reduced costs associated with re-routing Snowmobile/ATV trails due to more satisfied landowners who know there is a law enforcement presence to address any potential problems.
4. Increased tourism as the "bad apples" are removed from the trail/park system.
5. Reduced damage caused by motorized and non-motorized users.
6. Revenues generated by tickets issued under County Ordinances.
7. Reduced number of permanent tree stands.
8. Reduced costs associated with illegal dumping.
9. Reduced costs associated with "kegger" type parties with large numbers of minors.
10. Increased compliance with County permits - firewood, special camping, boughs, etc.

The following are brief comments from several Counties that have experience with the Recreational Officer position:

(Marinette) “We have 2 forest patrol officers to work on the County Forest. We could use 10 to keep up. There are 2 parks night caretakers working 40 hrs/wk in the evenings to help keep order in the Parks during the summer”.

(Rusk) “This is called a County Conservation Officer. Duties are park, boating, snowmobile trail, County Forest patrol. State funding for boating and snowmobile trail patrol is also used”.

(Florence) “Our County hired a person under the COP'S grant program. He was to be a Conservation Officer. Main activities were to do boat, snowmobile, ATV patrol. Help with timber sale, park, and other forestry duties. He was also supposed to be a backup of the deputies. He has done very little conservation work and almost all deputy work. His supervisor is the Sheriff. Has not worked. - person has to work for the Forestry Department”.

(Clark) “New position in 2001. Deal struck: Whatever salaries and wages that are not reimbursed under ATV, snowmobile, and boat patrol will be paid for by Forestry budget. So long as work is associated with the forest. (i.e. illegal dumping, tree stands, timber theft, etc.)”.

(Burnett) “This has been a great move for the County. We have been able to take care of a lot of problems. It has been one of the best moves for the County to have a deputy working on these issues”.

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 Rick Peters, 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, 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 or dirt bikes, 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 proper authorities. If a private citizen observes and reports a violation, staff will assist and instruct as to the proper procedure for filing a complaint with a law enforcement officer. Staff 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 some potential 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. The chapter will try to identify all sources of revenue 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, 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. Fundraisers could include raffles, sales of memberships, etc.

Below find the breakdown of County Forest uses with present funding sources and possible future sources listed.

Equestrian

Club
User Fees
State Organization
Donations
National Recreational Trail Act

Biking

Club
User Fees
State Organization
Rails – Trails
Donations
National Recreational Trail Act

Fishing

Club
State and Federal Organizations
 a. Trout Unlimited
User Fees – Boat Launchings

Environmental

Sustainable Forestry Grants
Stewardship Grants
 a. Habitat Restoration
 b. River Protection
 c. Lake Protection
 d. Stream Bank
County Conservation Fund
Timber Revenue

Hiking

Club
User Fees
State and Federal Organizations
Rails – Trails
Donations

Hunting

Club
State and Federal Organizations
 a. Whitetails Unlimited
 b. Ruffed Grouse Society
 c. Turkey Foundation
Wildlife Habitat
County Conservation Fund

Cross Country Ski

Club
User Fees
Donations
State and Federal Organizations
Rails – Trails
National Recreational Trail Act

Handicap - Elderly

ATV

Club
Registration – State Aid
Donations
State Organization
Rails – Trails

Forestry Issues

Timber Sale Revenue
Road Aids

Snowmobile
Club
Registration – State A
Donations
State and Federal Organization
Rails – Trails

Recreation Officer
ATV Funds
Snowmobile Funds
Boating Funds
County Resource Aid
Funds (Kincaid)
Timber Sale Revenue

Land Purchase
County Forest Land
Donations
Timber Sale Revenue
Stewardship Funds
Land Legacy

This, as all parts of this plan, is not static. 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.

II. ONGOING CITIZEN’S ADVISORY GROUP AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Lincoln County, along with the Citizen’s Advisory Group, embarked on a plan to involve the public in the process of developing an Access Plan for the Lincoln County Forest. The intention of the Citizen’s Advisory Group is 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.

A variety of techniques were used to provide ways for the public to participate in the planning process. Included in the process were the following:

- *Informational booth at the Lincoln County Fair
- *Questionnaires
- *Press releases
- *Research and Presentations
- *Open meetings of the Citizen’s Advisory Group
- *Public comments
- *Open house meetings

After development of the Access Plan, the Citizen's Advisory Group may meet periodically to address situations which may occur and review the plan's success.

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 are designed to help loggers, landowners, land managers, and land users to be good stewards of the County Forest. The Citizen's Advisory Group has 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, Land Conservation 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 will 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 INDIVIDUAL CONDITIONS, OBJECTIVES AND POTENTIAL PROJECTS

***HARRISON BLOCK**

HARRISON BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 26,200 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 (58%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by aspen (23%), swamp conifer-black spruce-tamarack (8%), swamp hardwood (2%), tag alder (2%), and red pine (1%). The remaining 6% 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, 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 Saronia-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, 7/27/1999.

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; and the Otter Lake park, campground and nature trail. In addition, the county maintains 21 formal boatlandings to give access to the water resources for fishing or other recreational uses. Many informal access points to water also exist. Funding is currently being requested to construct a second summer-use ATV trail in this unit. Motorized travel, hunting or trapping is not allowed on the special –use Wirth property. At the present time, the County is working on developing a walking trail on this 319-acre parcel.

HARRISON BLOCK CONDITIONS

1. Prohibit the use of recreational motorized vehicles, mountain bikes and horses on all designated hiking trails unless the Lincoln County Forestry Department designates a portion of the hiking trail for multiple use.
2. Many of the lakes in the Harrison Block are small and fall under the size allowed for outboard motorized use. Therefore, roads and turnarounds should be no larger than 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.

HARRISON BLOCK OBJECTIVES

1. Preserve the designated hiking trails that traverse this block.
2. Designated ATV use will be allowed on this block.
3. Establish a Quiet area in this block; non-motorized use.
4. Existing trails on Harrison trail map to be implemented for designated multi-use.
5. Non-funded trail from Town Hall Road to Harrison Hills trail area remain open (ATV use).
6. Trail use exclusive to Cross-Country Skiing during snow season.

HARRISON BLOCK POTENTIAL PROJECTS

1. Cinder Road and Ament Lake Road signed open for ATV's.
2. State-funded ATV trail expansion for multi-use. (Pending DNR process outline)
3. Create open shelters at ATV parking lots with other amenities.
4. Reclaim Otter Run Ski Trail when appropriate.
5. Creation of designated Equestrian Trails in the future. Until that time, allow Equestrians to use summer ATV trails.
6. Maintain parking areas in northwest end of Harrison and CTH B and at gravel pit dump on east end of CTH B.
7. Complete current proposed hiking trail for the Roothouse Lake area.
8. Establish a new Harrison Hills Hiking Trail from the Ice Age Trail to Otter Lake via Beaver, Ament, Tahoe, and Roothouse lakes area.
9. Develop Harrison Hills designated single or multiple track Mountain Bike trail.

***HIGHWAY 8 BLOCK**

HIGHWAY 8 BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 6500 acres of county forestland and includes 1430 acres of recently acquired property in the townships of Wilson and Bradley. Aspen stands (34%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by Mixed hardwood-White Birch-Hemlock and Hardwood (22%), tag alder (14%), swamp conifer (13%), pine (6%), and swamp hardwood (3%). The remaining 8% 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, 7/27/1999.

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 CONDITIONS

1. Secondary roads providing access to fishing areas remain open to motorized use.

HIGHWAY 8 BLOCK OBJECTIVES

1. Minimize motorized travel from private land into this block.
2. Designated hiking trails are allowed on this block.
3. Designated ATV use will be allowed on this block.
4. Maintain all secondary hunter access roads to an acceptable level, including ditching, crowning, gravelling, plowing and grading.

HIGHWAY 8 BLOCK POTENTIAL PROJECTS

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

***HIGHWAY T BLOCK**

HIGHWAY T BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 14,400 acres of county forestland. Aspen stands (54%) make up the majority of this block, followed by tag alder (15%), keg-lowland marsh (13%), northern hardwoods (8%), swamp conifer (7%), and pine types (1%). The remaining 2% 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 and the Flanigan Creek are present on this block.

Fourteen 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, 7/27/1999.

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 CONDITIONS

1. Secondary roads providing access to fishing areas remain open to motorized use.

HIGHWAY T BLOCK OBJECTIVES

1. Designated hiking trails are allowed on this block.
2. Designated ATV trails will be allowed on this block.

HIGHWAY T BLOCK POTENTIAL PROJECTS

1. All secondary roads more than 1 mile long will have graveled parking lots.
2. Where appropriate, secondary roads should be improved to about ½ mile off primary roads and then opened. Beyond this point, it shall be non-motorized thus creating a quiet area.
3. Work with Spirit Valley Riders ATV Club to create trails.

***MAIL ROUTE BLOCK**

MAIL ROUTE BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 4,550 acres of county forestland that includes 120 acres of non-forecrop property being leased as a gravel pit. Aspen stands (40%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by mixed hardwood-oak-white birch (28%), swamp conifer-black spruce-tamarack (10%), keg-lowland marsh (8%), tag alder (3%), red pine-white pine (2%), and fir-spruce (2%). The remaining 7% 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 counties 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.

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, 7/27/1999.

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 boatlanding to give access to the water resources for fishing or other recreational uses. A second access point is being planned for this unit in the near future.

MAIL ROUTE BLOCK CONDITIONS

1. Close the secondary road that travels southwesterly off Mail Route road to motorized traffic.
2. Secondary roads providing access to fishing areas remain open to motorized use.

3. Very limited motorized vehicle use (under County Forester's discretion).

MAIL ROUTE BLOCK OBJECTIVES

1. Designated hiking trails are allowed on this block.

***NEW WOOD BLOCK**

NEW WOOD BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 30,500 acres of county forestland. Aspen stands (51%) make up the majority of this block, followed by mixed hardwood-oak-white birch (17%), tag alder (16%), and swamp conifer types (6%). The remaining 10% 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 county's 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, Newwood 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-seven 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, 7/27/1999.

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

1. Primary roads closed for ATV use unless posted open.
2. Secondary roads closed to all motorized vehicles except those that are designated for winter ATV trails, Snowmobile trails, and those posted open.

NEW WOOD BLOCK OBJECTIVES

1. Hunter walking trails should be developed and maintained in this block.
2. Designated hiking trails are allowed on this block.
3. Designated ATV use will be allowed on this block.

NEW WOOD BLOCK POTENTIAL PROJECTS

1. Averill Creek fire lane from Camp Ave. to Morrison Lake should be improved and then opened.
2. Averill Creek fire lane from New Wood Road to Averill Creek should be improved and then opened.
3. All secondary roads more than 1 mile long will have graveled parking lots.
4. Where appropriate, secondary roads should be improved to about ½ mile off primary roads and then opened. Beyond these points, motorized vehicles will be prohibited, thus creating a quiet area.
5. Snowmobile trail from CTH E to Swamp Road open for ATV use (gated on ends) from May 1 to December 1 unless posted closed.

***PINE TREE LANE BLOCK**

PINE TREE BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 5000 acres of county forestland. Aspen stands (35%) make up the majority of this block, followed by pine (28%), tag alder (17%), keg (6%), swamp conifer (2%), swamp hardwood (1%), and white birch (1%). The remaining 10% 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 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, 7/27/1999.

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 CONDITIONS

1. Secondary roads providing access to fishing areas remain open to motorized use.
2. ATV use allowed on this block except where closed.

PINE TREE LANE BLOCK OBJECTIVES

1. Designated hiking trails are allowed on this block.

PINE TREE LANE BLOCK POTENTIAL PROJECTS

1. Develop Cross-Country Ski, Bike and Horse Trails on this block.

***UNDERDOWN BLOCK**

UNDERDOWN BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 8,260 acres of county forestland. Mixed hardwood-white birch stands (49%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by aspen (22%), keg-lowland marsh (15%), swamp conifer-tamarack-black spruce (6%), red pine-white pine (3%), swamp hardwood (1%), tag alder (1%), and fir-spruce (1%). The remaining 2% 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 the current aspen cover type and to expand this type when possible where poorer quality hardwood stands exist, 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 esthetics.

The topography in this block ranges from nearly level to very steep. This unit is comprised primarily of the Saronia-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.

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.

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; Underdown ice age trail; equestrian trails and mountain bike trails. 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 CONDITIONS

1. Allow designated ATV use only after ATV compliance has been demonstrated in Harrison Hills Block. Then open perimeter roads only, such as Horn Lake Road, so that ATV's can connect to open Town Roads. Open Snowmobile trail to summer ATV use only after the area east of Loop Road is repaired and constructed for that use. Compliance will be determined by the Lincoln County Forestry Committee.
2. No RV's or large camper trailers allowed on secondary roads.
3. A core area be managed to accommodate future growth in non-motorized recreational activities. All other motorized vehicles would be prohibited without express and written permission from the County Forestry Department, and said permission would be granted as required.
4. Identify standards of acceptable trail design, construction, maintenance, and use for each user group in this block. For new and existing trails, this would include multiple factors such as fragile areas, types of soils, degrees of slope, surface materials for problem areas, cost, maintenance requirements, frequency of maintenance, and who is responsible for trail maintenance.

UNDERDOWN BLOCK OBJECTIVES

1. In water areas, excrement will not be allowed to accumulate. (Signage is suggested to eliminate this problem).
2. Prohibit any motorized recreational vehicles on the Underdown Horse Trails except those designated for multiple use.
3. Trails shall remain as natural as possible unless Lincoln County Forestry Department and the Land Conservation Department decide that improvements are necessary.
4. Restore most trails to their original intended purpose that is hunter walking trails. (By definition a hunter walking trail is non-motorized).
5. Eliminate widening of current logging roads/trails to reduce damage and enhance the trails which run concurrent with these roads. Facilitate meetings between loggers and user groups before harvesting commences in recreational trail areas.

UNDERDOWN BLOCK POTENTIAL PROJECTS

1. Select trails intersecting Loop Road and Horn Lake Road shall be gated, rocked or bermed and posted no motorized vehicles. (Existing access points to lakes shall remain open).
2. The woods roads to Mist Lake from Horn Lake Road shall be improved to allow passenger vehicle traffic.
3. Create a designated ATV trail from Heineman Road to Copper Lake Avenue with parking facilities for summer use. Trail to be gated at parking facility, but allowing ATV access. Travel by ATV's only allowed on designated trail.
4. Open sided or enclosed heated shelter at Underdown parking lot for multi-use.
5. Add more campsites at horseman's park.
6. Have 12 "You are here" signs along horse trail with a bench and a hitching post.
7. Re-route horse trails off Loop Rd and Horn Lake Rd and try to keep trails off main roads.
8. Expand the horse trails from 21 miles to 25 miles.
9. Several auxiliary Adirondack style windbreak shelters located at points around X-C ski trail.
10. A beginner X-C ski trail from the parking lot connecting to the Loop Rd. trail.
11. Establish a new Underdown Hiking Loop Trail (3 to 4 miles) incorporating a portion of the existing Ice Age Trail on that block.
12. New mountain bike single track trail.
13. Designated single-track Mountain Bike trails will be allowed on this block.

***WILDWOOD BLOCK**

WILDWOOD BLOCK NARRATIVE

This block consists of approximately 4800 acres of county forestland. Mixed hardwood-white birch and hemlock-hardwood stands (36%) make up the majority of this unit, followed by aspen (27%), swamp hardwoods (11%), swamp conifer (10%), and tag alder (10%). The remaining 6% 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 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 watertable. 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.

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, 7/27/1999.

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 trail (trail 86) travels through this block on Wildwood Avenue.

WILDWOOD BLOCK CONDITIONS

1. Wildwood Avenue and the secondary loop of Wildwood Block are open to ATV's from May to March 31, and open to Snowmobiles during winter season unless posted closed.
2. A quiet area will be established in this block, as only limited motorized use will be allowed.

WILDWOOD BLOCK OBJECTIVES

1. Designated hiking trails are allowed on this block.
2. Designated ATV use will be allowed on this block.

WILDWOOD BLOCK POTENTIAL PROJECTS

1. Secondary roads that are one mile in length will have a graveled parking lot.

CONDITIONS, OBJECTIVES AND POTENTIAL PROJECTS THAT PERTAIN TO ALL LINCOLN COUNTY FOREST BLOCKS

1. CONDITIONS FOR ALL BLOCKS

1. Between the dates of December 1 and March 31, no person shall operate any type of unapproved motorized vehicle on a Snowmobile, ATV or Cross-Country Ski trail after grooming activities for these trails have commenced.
2. No person shall operate an ATV on any Snowmobile trail within the County between the dates of December 1 and March 31 when the temperature on the trail at a point four feet above the trail

surface is 28 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Winter ATV trails will not be opened until one week (7 days) after the State Funded Snowmobile Trail System is officially opened.

3. Designated Summer ATV trails will be open for use except from December 1-May 1 unless posted closed.

4. Non-licensed, moto-cross dirt bikes **are not** allowed on County Forest property without written permission from the Lincoln County Forestry Department.

5. Where primary and secondary roads are open to motorized, Equestrian or Mountain Bike use, cross-country travel between these roads is prohibited except on designated trails.

6. Primary roads closed to Snowmobile and ATV use unless posted open for Snowmobile or ATV use.

7. Secondary roads will be closed to motorized use when designated by the presence of gates, signs, rocks, berms or any other device placed by the County or its designee for the purpose of blocking a road.

8. Any damage to, manipulation of, or attempt to circumvent, any sign or gate, rock, berm or other device placed by the County or its agent for the purpose of blocking a closed road or area is prohibited.

9. All official recreational signs and speed limit signs must be obeyed.

10. A permit is required to utilize County Forest property for the purpose of gaining access to or removing forest products from any non-county owned lands. A bond may be required to accompany any such access requests. Any timber damaged will be paid for at a rate to be determined by the Lincoln County Forestry Department. Roads will be returned to a condition that is satisfactory with the County Forest Administrator.

11. Highway licensed vehicles are allowed only on primary roads, secondary roads and in designated parking areas except when such facilities are closed.

12. Mountain Bike travel allowed on all primary roads year round, and all secondary roads and designated trails except from March 31-May 1 or when posted closed. These trails are also restricted on winter recreational trails after grooming activities for these trails have commenced. It is suggested that participants should wear blaze orange during any Deer Rifle season.

13. Equestrian travel allowed on all primary roads year round, and all secondary roads and designated trails except from March 31-May 1 or when posted closed. These trails are also restricted on winter recreational trails after grooming activities for these trails have commenced. It is suggested that participants should wear blaze orange during any Deer Rifle season.

14. All secondary roads will be closed to motorized use from March 31 to May 1.

15. Special use permits may be issued by Lincoln County Forestry Department for highway vehicles or ATV's to access closed areas.

16. Blocking access for others is prohibited.

17. Vehicular or equestrian traffic into or through any unfrozen lake, stream or wetland is prohibited unless DNR authorized crossing structures are in place. Any type of activity that causes destruction of natural growth, erosion, rutting, damage to a lakebed, or has the potential to do any other type of environmental degradation or damage is prohibited.

18. No organized events shall be permitted (e.g. races, hiking, derbies, etc.) on the County Forest without approval by the County Forest Administrator or Forestry, Land and Parks Committee.

19. Sponsors of any event will accept liability for trail (etc.) damage occurring as a result of the sponsored event. Trails (etc.) are subject to inspection by Lincoln County before and after the event. A charge may be assessed for the inspection.

20. No person shall operate a motorized vehicle with studded tires on property administered by the Forestry Committee unless authorized by the County Forest Administrator or Forestry, Land and Parks Committee.

21. Notwithstanding other provisions of this ordinance, the Forestry, Land and Parks Committee and their agents may, at their discretion, close any and all roads or areas within the County Forest boundaries to protect the roads from damage caused by any activity.

22. Where access is limited, ingress or egress to or from private land over County Forest property is prohibited unless permission is granted by Lincoln County.

23. During the bear harvest season, ATV's may be used behind gates, rocks and berms to extract animals from the Lincoln County Forest. Hunters must call the Sheriff's Department at 715-536-6272 and report the following information: back tag number and general location of the site of extraction.

24. During the deer archery season, ATV's may be used behind gates, rocks and berms to extract animals from the Lincoln County Forest. Hunters must call the Sheriff's Department at 715-536-6272 and report the following information: back tag number and general location of the site of extraction.

25. During all deer rifle harvest seasons, ATV's may be used behind gates, rocks and berms to extract animals from the Lincoln County Forest.

26. As opportunities arise, consideration will be made to provide additional access to the Lincoln County Forest for the handicapped and elderly.

2. OBJECTIVES FOR ALL BLOCKS

1. Official request for a Recreational Officer.

2. The Lincoln County Forest road system is open for all phases of forest management activities. Road expectations will be included on timber sale maps. Items being covered

consist of new road construction, use and improvement of existing roads, additional improvement beyond contractor's needs, and conditions of roads at time of closure.

3. Recreational groups, along with the involvement of the Forestry Department, will attempt to develop and enhance recreational trails.
4. Each organized User Group with designated trails for their use must complete a formal Land Use Agreement or Contract with Lincoln County. Lincoln County Forestry Department should determine open and closed roads with consideration for sensitive areas and User Groups.
5. Provide motorized access, with appropriate turn-arounds, to lakes and streams. Improvements to prevent pollution, silting and shoreline damage will be implemented. If damage continues or escalates, Lincoln County Forestry Department can close the area.
6. Use must not result in surface water (lakes and streams) pollution, as determined by Lincoln County.
7. Use must not result in damage to wetland communities or be the cause of shoreline erosion, as determined by Lincoln County.
8. Where appropriate and necessary, primary and secondary roads should be improved, and parking areas should be developed to disperse recreation pressure.
9. All efforts shall be made to take into consideration the elderly and mobility impaired.
10. State funded ATV Trails should be gated and signed "open to ATV's" when crossing primary roads.
11. Trails are multi-use where designated.
12. Trail Ambassador program will be used on all ATV Trails.
13. Follow through on proposed ATV Trails as stated on individual land blocks.
14. Create a fund in the Forestry Budget for recreational trail development and enhancement.
15. Roads or trails that presently or will be rocked or bermed for environmental healing be re-opened when applicable on a regular basis.
16. Close (gate or berm) at least 50% of all secondary roads to motorized recreation.
17. Investigate establishing a trail pass system for all users of the County Forest, not including hikers, hunters and fishers when done without the use of motorized vehicles in the pursuit of their sport on County land. Revenue generated will be used to support Recreational Officer and trail maintenance.
18. Identify problem areas on multiple use trails and attempt to jointly solve them through a facilitation process.

19. To the greatest extent possible, the Ice Age Trail should be managed as a hiking only trail.
20. Increase penalties for littering, vandalism and reckless use.
21. Annual voluntary clean-up to be encouraged and supported by the County.
22. Purchase surveillance cameras to use in areas with repetitive damage.
23. Work with local Chamber of Commerce, restaurants, and lodging to promote awareness of local opportunities.
24. Work with local volunteers to help people coming to the area for the first time or going to remote areas. Could facilitate guides as needed for this purpose.
25. Construction/maintenance of hunter access roads can be assigned to an independent contractor when feasible.
26. Lake access on the County Forest will be inventoried and prioritized, and cost estimates developed for practical boat landing facilities.

3. POTENTIAL PROJECTS FOR ALL BLOCKS

1. Create an east/west corridor ATV trail from Taylor/Lincoln/Langlade Counties.
2. Designated walk in primitive camp sites.
3. Attempt to secure permanent easements or purchase lands necessary to assure timber harvest and/or public access to County Forest land or waters.
4. Continue Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality on all road and trail projects and log landings.
5. Continue to develop ruffed grouse management areas that will also serve as non-motorized use locations.
6. The Forestry, Land and Parks Committee would consider additional recreational activities that would not compromise the protection of the resources on the County Forest or greatly conflict with other uses.