

COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN
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2 **700 ACCESS CONTROL AND HISTORY**

3 Resource management and protection activities, recreational uses, and other public uses on the
4 Chippewa County Forest require several different types of access. Since the Forest is large and
5 diverse, a broad network of access routes has developed. A combination of geography, soils,
6 vegetation, surface waters, seasons of the year, presence/absence of roads or trails, ownership of
7 adjoining lands, and public regulations interact to control access to any part of the County Forest.
8 Most of Chippewa County Forest roads and trails were developed in part for the harvesting and
9 transporting of forest products.

10
11 Many of the older, existing roads and trails were originally developed as logging roads, forest fire
12 protection lanes, or trails used to reach popular hunting and fishing areas. The locations and
13 standards for these earlier roads were not routinely established by County personnel.

14
15 Over the years, the road density and frequency of vehicle use on the County Forest has increased in
16 response to an expanding number of motorized recreational vehicles and to an active timber harvest
17 program. Often times, different uses have occurred on the same trails with minimal conflicts. But the
18 diverse demands for, and uses of, the County Forest warrants an integrated access management
19 plan.

20
21 **LIST OF PROBLEM AREAS AND REASONS FOR ACCESS PLANNING**

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

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

25 Erosion: soils eroding due to use, or over-use by vehicles.

26 Damage to access: rutted or impassable roads requiring costly repair by the County or other
27 specific user groups.

28 Litter: depositing garbage and waste on the Forest.

29 Over-utilization of resources: e.g. reduced availability of trophy-sized deer, excessive harvest of
30 ruffed grouse along trails, etc.

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

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

34 Endangered species management: e.g. high road densities conflict with timber wolf recovery,
35 eagle and osprey nest disturbance.

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

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

39 Road placement: e.g. roads can be closed for improper location and evaluated for replacement.

40 Clear and concise policy for the public.

41
42 **705 CHAPTER OBJECTIVES**

- 43 A. Provide direction to the Committee and resource managers in order to maintain a network of
44 roads and trails on the County Forest. This will meet the needs for resource management and
45 protection activities, as well as provide public access for recreation opportunities.
- 46 B. Identify the distribution, density, and types of roads and uses of roads and trails needed to
47 establish a safe and efficient transportation and recreation system that complements the
48 economic, environmental, and social interest in the County Forest.
- 49 C. Identify the existing and future County Forest roads eligible for transportation aids under s.86.315
50 (1), Wis. Stats.
- 51 D. Identify areas on the County Forest where the access is limited or restricted.
- 52 E. Identify the provisions and criteria that will be policy when addressing management issues on the
53 County Forest.

54 **710 ROADS**

55 Chippewa County Forest and Parks staff will oversee the construction and maintenance of all roads
 56 within the County Forest. These roads may be constructed and maintained by the County, or a
 57 private contractor working under the direction of the County. The specifications for road construction
 58 and maintenance will vary with the frequency, duration, and planned use of each road. Three major
 59 types of roads occur on the Forest: permanent primary roads; permanent secondary roads, and
 60 temporary roads.
 61

62 New road establishment should consider information identifying areas with sensitive soils or severe
 63 slopes that have the potential for adverse water quality impacts from land management practices.
 64 County staff can work with local DNR water resources staff to develop site-specific measures where
 65 appropriate.

66 **710.1 PERMANENT PRIMARY FOREST ROADS**

67 Permanent primary roads provide primary access to the County Forest and are designed,
 68 constructed, and maintained for year-round use. These roads serve as essential access
 69 corridors for multiple use management. All of these roads have received at least some gravel
 70 surface improvement and are periodically graded. Vehicle use may be restricted at various
 71 times of the year to minimize physical damage to the road.
 72

73 Forest roads in this category qualify for the County Forest Road Aids program. Qualifying
 74 roads must meet minimum design standards of a 16-foot surface width and 20-foot roadway
 75 width. A yearly aid payment is used to maintain and improve these certified public roads. The
 76 following table lists the roads currently certified under s. 86.31(1), Wis. Stats.
 77
 78

CHIPPEWA COUNTY CURRENT WDOT CERTIFIED

TOWNSHIP	SECTION	LENGTH (MI)	ROAD NAME/COMMENTS
Birch Creek	Sec. 22, T32N-R7W	0.93	Birch Creek Flowage Trail
Birch Creek	Sec. 19 & 30, T32N-R7W Sec. 36, T32N-R8W	3.00	Deer Fly Trail
Birch Creek	Sec. 31, T32N-R7W Sec. 36, T32N-R8W	1.16	High Ridge Trail
Birch Creek	Sec. 27 & 34, T32N-R7W	0.41	Horseshoe Flowage Trail
Birch Creek	Sec. 33, T32N-R7W	0.24	Spring Creek Flowage Trail
Birch Creek	Sec. 18, T32N-R7W	0.67	Willow Cr. Flowage Trail #1
Birch Creek	Sec. 17, T32N-R7W	1.10	Willow Cr. Flowage Trail #2 & #3
Cleveland	Sec. 1 & 11, T31N-R8W	2.44	Deer Fly Trail
Cleveland	Sec. 11 & 14, T31N-R8W	1.22	Hay Meadow Flowage Trail
Cleveland	Sec. 9, 10 & 11, T31N-R8W	2.31	Hickory Ridge Trail
Cleveland	Sec. 5, T31N-R7W	0.70	Norway Trail

Cleveland	Sec. 7, T31N-R7W Sec. 12, T32N-R8W	0.96	Old Farm Road
Cleveland	Sec. 4 & 9, T31N-R7W	2.63	O'Neil Creek Flowage Trail
Ruby	Sec. 4, T31N-R5W Sec. 31, 32 & 33, T32N-R5W	3.32	Buck Horn Trail
Ruby	Sec. 31, T32N-R5W	0.35	Mallard Flowage Trail
TOTAL		21.44 miles	

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The County periodically reviews roads which may have potential to be developed as a WDOT certified forest road. Decision to improve to certified status is based on cost of improving, work planning needs, and benefit to public.

A map of these roads can be found in Chapter 900.

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710.2 PERMANENT SECONDARY ROADS

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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. These roads constitute the majority of roads in the forest, in both mileage and number.

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Most roads in this category are located in areas on the County Forest where motor vehicle use is limited or restricted, due to concerns about perpetually wet soils, user conflicts, resource protection, potential for erosion, maintenance expense, illegal dumping, and human safety. For the most part, the roads will be blocked with either a gate or dirt berm and/or signed as restricted from un-authorized motor vehicle traffic. **Foot traffic is allowed on all roads.**

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102

~~Vehicle access will only be authorized for planned management activities or fire protection.~~
Except as provided under Section 710.2.1, vehicle access will only be authorized for planned management activities, law enforcement, or fire protection.

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710.2.1 PUBLIC ACCESS TO SELECT PERMANENT SECONDARY ROADS IN THE TOWN OF RUBY UNDER FROZEN GROUND CONDITIONS. (added on _____, 2015)

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Motor vehicle use is allowable on approximately 5.0 miles of permanent secondary roads as shown on the Map titled "Permanent Secondary Roads In The Town of Ruby County Forest Open To Motorized Vehicle Use During Frozen Ground Conditions" included in Chapter 900, subject to the following conditions and limitations:

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- 1. Access shall not be limited to specific user groups. On-road ATV use is allowed.**
- 2. Access shall be authorized under frozen ground conditions only, as determined by, the County Forest Administrator or their designee, during the time period from approximately December 11 – March 30. Sufficiently frozen ground conditions are such that a ¾ ton pickup can drive on all of the subject roads at all times during the day, without breaking through the ground surface.**

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Frozen ground motor vehicle access to select permanent secondary roads is limited to county forest land in the Town of Ruby due to the following reasons:

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124

- 1. The County Forest land in the Town of Ruby is a relatively flat landscape that is primarily internally drained or contains saturated soils/groundwater contact; whereas, other areas of County Forest (including Special Units) have irregular**

125 topography consisting of steep slopes, closed depressions, and a relatively
126 dense surface drainage network (i.e. streams). Therefore, The County Forest
127 land in the Town of Ruby is significantly less susceptible to erosion and sediment
128 loading to wetlands and surface water resources.

129
130
131 2. The County Forest land in the Town of Ruby has historically been less accessible
132 by motor vehicles than other County Forest land because of a low density of
133 permanent primary county forest and Town roads.

134
135 3. Other areas of County Forest (including Special Units) have a higher density of
136 developed recreational trails. These trails increase accessibility and, as a result,
137 there is more intensive recreational use.

138 Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department Staff shall notify the
139 Town of Ruby Clerk of gate opening and closing and post notification of gate opening and
140 closing on the County Website. When practicable, notification of anticipated gate opening and
141 closure shall also be communicated to the Town of Ruby Clerk and posted on the county
142 website. The website shall include a map showing which roads are open to motor vehicle use.

143
144 Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department Staff shall be
145 responsible for maintenance required to facilitate access and/or minimize environmental
146 damage, including:

- 147
- 148 1. Brushing and removal of wind throws and deadfalls.
- 149 2. Installation and maintenance of road infrastructure such as culverts, at-grade
150 crossings, ditches, and road surface.
- 151 3. Snow removal (i.e. plowing) may be required to achieve and maintain frozen
152 ground. In situations where maintained snowmobile trails use open permanent
153 secondary roads, snow removal shall maintain adequate snow coverage on the road.
- 154 4. Repair of rutting, erosion, and damage to vegetation.
- 155
- 156

157 Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department Staff shall be
158 responsible for monitoring the permanent secondary road surface, corridor, and adjacent
159 lands, including coordination with law enforcement, to identify:

- 160 1. Environmental damage to soil, vegetation, water resources.
- 161 2. Unauthorized dumping/litter.
- 162 3. Increase in unlawful activities.
- 163 4. Public safety concerns.
- 164

165 Access to some or all of the permanent secondary roads shown on the Map titled "Permanent
166 Secondary Roads In The Town of Ruby County Forest Open To Motorized Vehicle Use During
167 Frozen Ground Conditions" included in Chapter 900 may be temporarily suspended, without
168 advanced public notice, at the sole discretion of the County Forest Administrator, under the
169 following circumstances:

- 170 1. Environmental damage to soil, vegetation, water resources or unauthorized
171 dumping/ littering cannot be prevented with reasonable accommodations.
- 172 2. At the request of law enforcement personnel in response to immediate public safety
173 concerns.
- 174

175 At their discretion, The Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee
176 may take action to revoke access to some or all of the permanent secondary roads shown on the
177 Map titled "Permanent Secondary Roads In The Town of Ruby County Forest Open To Motorized
178 Vehicle Use During Frozen Ground Conditions" included in Chapter 900 in the event of intolerable
179 or unsustainable levels of:

- 180 1. Environmental damage to soil, vegetation, water resources.
- 181 2. Unauthorized dumping/litter.
- 182 3. Increase in unlawful activities.
- 183 4. Public safety concerns.
- 184

The costs associated with the motorized use authorized under this Subsection shall be the responsibility of the County. As part of the annual budget process, the County Forest Administrator will estimate and request required operational funding.

710.3 TEMPORARY ROADS

Many of the roads on the County 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. Many of these roads are accessed via permanent secondary roads. These roads are naturally or artificially revegetated and often closed by use of earthen berms/bunkers or other physical barriers.

Temporary roads on existing and past sales will be considered for closure. Reasons will include protection of perpetually wet soils, potential for erosion, potential for rutting, 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.

720 RECREATIONAL TRAIL ACCESS

This trail network provides access for many recreational opportunities on the Forest. An important role of the Forest is to provide sustainable recreational trails that do not cause long-term natural resource damage, and that are compatible with other uses. Management activities adjacent to recreational trails will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If deemed necessary, alterations will be made to accommodate the recreational use. The Forest and Parks Committee has the authority to open, close or relocate trails.

Maps for recreational trail uses of the Forest are in Chapter 900-Appendix.

720.1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

Requests for recreational trails will be reviewed by the Forest and Parks Committee. Groups requesting specific trail development or use must present a plan for the long term funding and maintenance of proposed trails.

Construction of a recreational trail which would increase the erosion potential of one acre or more of land is subject to state and federal stormwater runoff requirements (NR216, Wis. Adm. Code and s. 283.33, Wis. Stats). Construction or development for silvicultural purposes is presently exempt from these requirements. Recreational trail development in Chippewa County meeting these parameters will employ best management practices for water quality (PUB-FR-093-95) to mitigate any adverse impacts. An erosion control plan will be prepared for each project depicting the location of the project and surrounding wetlands and what erosion control measures will be employed.

Note: Best management practices for water quality, as they relate to trail construction and maintenance, are currently being refined and revised along with technical standards for trail construction. Once completed, a copy of the standards will be kept in the Forest and Parks Administrator's office.

725 NON-MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL TRAILS

725.1 HIKING

725.1.1 Undesignated Hiking Trails

All of the County Forest is open to hiking or foot travel, unless marked with signs closing an area.

239 725.1.2 Designated Hiking Trails

240 Ice Age Trail

241 A portion of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail has been developed across Chippewa County
242 Forest land. This portion of the trail has been developed and is operated and maintained
243 under a land use agreement with the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation Inc. and its Chippewa
244 Moraine Chapter. See Chapter 900 for a copy of this agreement.

245
246 This trail is part of a continuous trail system across Wisconsin, linking the units of the Ice Age
247 National Scientific Reserve. The trail is primarily used for hiking, snowshoeing and cross
248 country skiing.

249
250 The long-term goal for the Ice Age Trail is that the trail be developed, managed and
251 recognized as a premier hiking trail of national significance for its scenic and recreational
252 qualities, and that it becomes part of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. All of the Ice Age Trail
253 within the Chippewa County Forest has obtained certification from the National Park Service
254 (NPS). Under this certification and the previously referenced land use agreement, the County
255 and the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation agrees that the trail should be designed and
256 maintained to follow the guidelines of the *Ice Age National Scenic Trail: A Handbook for
257 Trail Design, Construction and Maintenance*. This handbook lays out the trail standards, as
258 put forth by the NPS.

259
260 The Ice Age Trail crosses the County Forest in Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 in the Town of
261 Cleveland, Sections 31, 32, 33 & 36 in the Town of Birch Creek and Sections 26 & 35 in the
262 Town of Sampson. The trail is both a National and State Scenic Trail and follows the end
263 moraines of the most recent glacial period in Wisconsin. It is intended to provide a high
264 quality, rustic walking experience across Wisconsin.

265
266 Management practices in, and adjacent to, this designated trail will be designed to maintain
267 the character of the landscape and minimize disruption to the trail and its users. The trail
268 corridors are designated as a Zone B aesthetic management zone which is referenced in
269 Chapter 500.

270
271 Portions of the trail have been routed on old logging roads. This was done in the past
272 because the trails already existed and minimized construction. They were also used in some
273 cases because they may have gone past scenic or important glacial features. In addition,
274 these roads are typically used only on a periodic basis and might not be used for a period of
275 years, and were re-vegetated and easy to maintain. The county forest timber sale program
276 occasionally impacts trail sections using these logging roads when the roads are again used
277 for timber access. Use of the trail for logging must comply with any restrictions designated
278 under the land use agreement. If the trail is located on a logging road which is actively used,
279 appropriate signing will be installed by the County informing trail users of truck traffic and
280 timber sale activities. To avoid user conflict and safety concerns it may be necessary to
281 temporarily re-route the trail. Re-routing the trail requires substantial work by volunteers
282 associated with the trail and tends to be confusing to the public and is, therefore, used as a
283 last resort.

284
285 Trees and signing identifying the trail will be maintained and protected by inclusions into
286 timber sale contracts. In order to avoid confusion with trail users, an effort will be made to
287 avoid the use of medium blue and yellow paint on projects immediately adjacent to the Ice
288 Age Trail. Yellow (Ice Age Trail) is the standard color for designating this trail. Trails bisecting
289 timber sales will be cleared of trees and logging debris daily.

290 725.2 BICYCLING

291 725.2.1 Undesignated Bicycle Trails

292 If not gated or posted to prohibit travel, all trails, roads and fire lanes are open for recreational
293 bicycle use. Off-trail mountain bike use may be restricted in a specific area if use causes
294 erosion or other environmental damages.

295

296 725.2.2 Designated Bicycle Trails

297 Old Abe State Trail

298
299 The Old Abe State Trail is a cooperative effort between the State of Wisconsin and
300 Chippewa County. This paved 19.5 mile trail connects Lake Wissota State Park in
301 Chippewa Falls and Brunet Island State Park in Cornell. The trail is an abandoned railroad
302 grade and has been developed into a trail for bicyclists, snowmobiles, hikers, horse back
303 riders and in-line skaters. The trail winds through agricultural and forest land while following
304 the undeveloped shoreline of the Chippewa River. The trail is operated under a
305 memorandum of use agreement between the County and the Department of Natural
306 Resources, and is located outside the boundaries of the county forest.

307
308 Hickory Ridge Bike Trail

309
310 A short mountain bike trail system has been developed as a trial basis trail system, in the
311 area near the Hickory Ridge Cross Country Ski Trail. Local bicycle enthusiasts developed
312 the trail. The trail is being evaluated for potential erosion problems and user demand. The
313 trail may be expanded if erosion is not a significant problem and there aren't any user
314 conflicts with the nearby ski and horse trails.

315
316

317 725.3 HORSEBACK RIDING

318 725.3.1 Undesignated Horseback Riding Trails

319 There are no undesignated trails for horseback riding in the County Forest. All horseback
320 riding is restricted to designated trails only.

321
322

323 725.3.2 Designated Horseback Riding Trails

324 In the County Forest, the Hay Meadow Horse Trail provides 22 miles of designated horseback
325 riding trail with several loop trails. The Chippewa Valley Trail Riders, a local horseback riding
326 organization, has been a key force in locating, developing and maintaining portions of the trail.
327 A map of the horse trail can be found in Chapter 900.

328
329 Outside the County Forest, the Old Abe Horse Trail, which parallels the Old Abe State Trail
330 from 97th Avenue to Jim Falls, provides approximately 5.5 miles of trail. There are parking
331 areas at both ends of the trail.

332 725.4 CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

333 725.4.1 Undesignated Cross-Country Ski Trails

334 All trails on county forestland, except snowmobile trails, are open for cross-country skiing.
335 Cross-country skiing on groomed snowmobile trails is not permitted due to safety concerns.

336

337 725.4.2 Designated Cross-Country Ski Trails

338 There are two trails maintained and groomed for cross country skiing in the Chippewa County
339 Forest. The Friends of Hickory Ridge Trail have agreed to maintain and groom the 8.8 mile
340 Hickory Ridge Ski Trail system. These duties include: trail surfacing, track setting, bathroom
341 cleaning, litter removal from parking lots and sign placement as required to maintain a safe
342 skiing experience. The Friends of Hickory Ridge Trail were granted permission to collect trail
343 donations to be used for maintenance purposes.

344
345 The River Road Cross Country Ski Trail is located 2.5 miles north of Cornell and adjacent to
346 the Chippewa River. The trail is groomed and maintained for public use by Chippewa County,
347 and is approximately 4 miles long.

348
349 It is the goal of the Forest and Parks Committee to offer both ski-skating and traditional Nordic
350 skiing opportunities. Where feasible, attempts will be made to have local ski enthusiasts or

351 organizations do winter grooming and maintenance of ski trails. A map of the ski trails can be
352 found in Chapter 900.

353 725.5 OTHER NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL USE

354 Other non-motorized recreational trail uses including but not limited to, snowshoeing, dog
355 sledding (except on groomed cross country ski trails), hiking, and hunting on foot are
356 permitted on all trails except where otherwise posted as closed.

357 **730 MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL TRAILS**

358 The use of motorized vehicles on the County Forest continues to increase. The design,
359 maneuverability, and power of the vehicles have improved. ATV use in particular, has grown in
360 popularity. The growing number of users has increased the need and expense for trail maintenance.
361 It's important that with the increasing numbers, that users stay on designated trails that are designed
362 and maintained to minimize user conflicts and avoid unnecessary environmental damage.

364 730.1 SNOWMOBILING

365 730.1.1 Undesignated Snowmobile Trails

366 No cross-country use of snowmobiles is permitted. Snowmobile use is permitted when the
367 ground is snow-covered, on all primary, secondary and temporary roads, except where posted
368 as closed. The Hickory Ridge and River Road Cross Country Ski Trails are closed to
369 snowmobiles. Snowmobiling is not allowed on any county authorized snowmobile trails when
370 trails are closed for use or contrary to posted notice. Use on the Forest during other times of
371 the year is not allowed.

372

373 730.1.2 Designated Snowmobile Trails

374 It is the policy of the Forest and Parks Committee to provide some opportunity for
375 snowmobiling on the Chippewa County Forest. The Forest and Parks Department will
376 coordinate the county-wide snowmobile trail program under s 23.09(11) and (26) of the
377 Wisconsin Statutes, Natural Resources Code NR 50.09 and the Chippewa County Park and
378 Recreation Ordinance. A maintenance program, now in place, utilizes cost-sharing funds from
379 the Department of Natural Resources.

380

381 Chippewa County applies annually for state funding for the operation and maintenance of a
382 countywide snowmobile trail system. There are approximately 13 miles of the state funded
383 snowmobile trail located within the County Forest, which represents only a small portion of the
384 overall countywide trail system. The County has a maintenance agreement with the
385 Chippewa Valley Snowmobile Organization, outlining the operation, maintenance, and
386 insurance obligations between the County and the Snowmobile Organization. The
387 Snowmobile Organization is a non-profit organization that represents the various snowmobile
388 clubs within the County. Within the County Forest, the Snowmobile Organization does the
389 winter trail grooming and signing and the County does the summer maintenance. Refer to
390 Chapter 900 for a copy of the trail maintenance agreement.

391

392

393 The County trail system is a part of the statewide network of snowmobile trails which link
394 Chippewa County with adjoining counties as well as the rest of the state. Snowmobile
395 registrations, gas tax, and out of state user fees are used to support trail development,
396 signing, maintenance, grooming, and bridge construction.

397

398 All groomed snowmobile trails are closed to cars and trucks during the snowmobile season
399 unless vehicle use is authorized by Chippewa County. The trails may be used for logging
400 access when necessary and are subject to restrictions on use and restoration as designated
401 by the County Forest and Parks Administrator or designee. When vehicle use is authorized,
402 contractors must maintain the trail in a safe condition, free from debris and equipment, and
403 with a minimum of 3 inches of snow-pack. Trail width shall not exceed 16 feet.

404

405 DNR's Trail Signing Handbook will be used as the guide for posting standardized signs and
406 will assist in promoting uniformity for trail signing throughout the county. Only trail signs that
407 provide information for safety, regulations, or trail directions will be permitted. Private and

408 business signs are not authorized on the Forest. All trail signs must be mounted on wooden,
409 metal, or flexible plastic posts.

410
411 The snowmobile trails will be closed and gated during the off-season to minimize summer
412 maintenance, unless the trail is used for some other authorized purpose. A portion of the
413 snowmobile trail is used for an ATV trail during the summer and any maintenance expense
414 incurred from ATV use is paid for from ATV maintenance funds received from the State DNR.

415
416 There are currently no club sponsored trails on county forest land. Club sponsored trails
417 would be considered by the Committee, on a case-by-case basis, if requested. If a club trail is
418 approved, an agreement would be required, outlining the operation, maintenance and
419 insurance obligations between Chippewa County and the local snowmobile club.

420 730.2 ALL TERRAIN VEHICLES (ATV)

421 730.2.1 Undesignated ATV Trails

422 There are no undesignated ATV trails on the County Forest. ATV use is permitted only on
423 designated trails and operation by holders of a special use permit for such purposes as
424 disabled access.

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428 730.2.2 Designated ATV Trails

429
430 It is the policy of the Forest and Parks Committee to provide some opportunity for ATV
431 recreation on the Chippewa County Forest. More than 19 miles of ATV trails wind and loop
432 through portions of the County Forest. There are 2 convenient parking areas located on each
433 end of the trail system. ATV's may only operate on designated ATV trails and routes. The
434 trails may be used for logging access when necessary and are subject to restrictions on use
435 and restoration as designated by the County Forest Administrator or his designee.

436
437 These trails are open to ATV riding from May 1st to November 15th of each year, except in the
438 case of emergencies, when the County may close and gate the trails. The ATV trail is also
439 open after hunting hours during the gun deer season for retrieving a deer carcass. It is the
440 intent of the County to consider changes to the County Code of Ordinances that may expand
441 the opportunity for game retrieval using an ATV.

442
443 ATV registration, out-of-state user fees and the gas tax formula are used to support trail
444 development, signing, maintenance and bridge construction.

445
446 Public ATV trail systems that utilize private lands have not materialized in the way that
447 snowmobile trails have. It is widely recognized that the vast majority of public ATV trails have
448 evolved on public lands and that the majority of future trail development will be limited to public
449 land.

450
451 Organized user groups, county residents, and tourists have expressed their desires that the
452 existing ATV trail be expanded to provide a "loop" that would allow riders to begin and end at a
453 parking area/trailhead with limited "backtracking". It has been suggested that increasing the
454 extent of ATV trail by creating a 'loop' from the County Highway M parking area/trailhead will
455 benefit tourism in the County, especially the Lake Holcombe Service Area.

456
457 Chippewa County will pursue expansion of the County Forest ATV Trail to connect the County
458 Highway M parking area/trailhead with the Deer Fly Trail utilizing County Forest lands that are
459 south of County Highway M, subject to the following conditions:

- 460 1. The Chippewa Valley ATV Council, or a similar organization, must formally commit
461 through written agreement with the County to provide ongoing, long-term
462 maintenance as required for the County to maintain Sustainable Forestry Certification
463 and meet all applicable regulations and grant requirements.
- 464 2. The County must receive confirmation of funding adequate for initial trail development
465 and long-term maintenance.

- 466 3. The Towns of Birch Creek and Cleveland must be consulted and reasonable efforts
467 to mitigate their concerns shall be made.
- 468 4. Any trail expansion will result in a “loop” and not additional “out-and-back” trail.
- 469 5. Conditions for “Conversion of Existing Trails To An Alternative Trail Use” as defined in
470 Section 510.8 shall be met.

471 For the specific location of this trail, please see the “Chippewa County ATV Trail” map in
472 Chapter 900.

473 730.3 OTHER MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL VEHICLE TRAILS

474 730.3.1 Undesignated

475 Other motorized recreational use of the County Forest is prohibited on trails that are blocked
476 with rock, bermed, gated or signed as closed. Due to concerns of erosion and per county
477 code, motorcycles are not allowed on county forestland except registered motor vehicles on
478 designated gas tax roads.

479 735 RESTRICTED ACCESS AREAS

480 In addition to providing trails for motorized vehicle use, the Forest and Parks Committee may also
481 provide and designate areas where motorized equipment is not permitted unless authorized. The
482 principal intent of these areas is to prevent environmental damage to sensitive areas, protect
483 historical or archeological sites, protect endangered and threatened species, provide for human safety
484 and provide areas for quiet, secluded recreation. Cross country use of the forest for motorized use is
485 prohibited. The Committee may consider and designate restricted access areas on the Chippewa
486 County Forest.

487 740 WATER ACCESS

488 As a result of the wide distribution of lakes, streams, rivers and other surface waters on the County
489 Forest, water access may be planned, developed or restricted as a component of the overall Forest
490 access management plan. Several boat landings, canoe landings and adjacent roads currently
491 provide water access on the County Forest primarily for recreational activities. In addition, these water
492 access points may also provide water supply points for fire apparatus working to suppress forest fires
493 or nearby structural fires.

494 Existing water access points will be maintained to provide for launch of small fishing boat or canoe.
495 Not all watercraft will be able to use these access points. These landings are built for public use and
496 not for private boat mooring sites. Mooring or storing boats for longer than 24 hours is prohibited.
497

498 740.1 PUBLIC BOAT ACCESS SITES MAINTAINED BY CHIPPEWA COUNTY ON THE FOREST

499 These public boat access sites developed on the Chippewa County Forest are open to public
500 use:

- 501 1. Bass Lake # 2 (T31N-R8W, Sections 1 & 2)
- 502 2. Bass Lake # 3 (T31N-R8W, Section 3)
- 503 3. Hay Meadow Flowage # 1
- 504 4. Horseshoe Lake (T32N-R8W, Section 33)
- 505 5. Knickerbocker Lake
- 506 6. Otter Lake (Otter Lake Park) – two landing, one at Otter Lake Park and one on the east side
507 of the Lake
- 508 7. Town Line Lake
- 509 8. Round Lake

510 740.2 UNDEVELOPED WATER ACCESS POINTS

511 Other undeveloped water access points for canoes and boats currently exist on the County
512 Forest. These are used routinely to hand launch car-top boats or canoes but have not been
513 developed for boat trailer launching. These sites are not routinely maintained and may be

514 closed if erosion damage becomes severe. All new sites for developed water access must be
515 reviewed and approved by the Forest and Parks Committee.
516

517 **745 WILD LAKES**

518 The surface waters encompassed under the "wild lakes designation" include those restricted use
519 areas that are not open to any gasoline-powered vehicles, watercraft or snowmobiles except when
520 snow covered. In general, all or most of the shorelines of these lakes and streams are owned by
521 Chippewa County. Under the authority of s. 30.77 (3) Wis. Stats., Chippewa County may request
522 that Townships establish regulations restricting motorized use on waters that are designated Wild
523 Lakes. The intent of these restrictions is to protect aquatic resources of these lakes but still allow
524 human access. Currently, no lakes in the County Forest are designated "wild lakes".

525 **750 WETLANDS**

526 In addition to surface waters, all wetlands on the Forest are closed to motorized recreational vehicle
527 use when soils are not frozen. Vehicle use during non-frozen seasons causes soil rutting,
528 compaction, and damage to vegetation. The wetlands are not listed individually here but include all
529 areas where soils, groundwater or surface waters support the growth of vegetation commonly
530 associated with wetland plant communities.

531 **755 ACCESS TO PRIVATE LANDS**

532 Applications by private parties to build or improve access roads through County Forest land will be
533 considered by the Forest and Parks Committee on a case-by-case basis. As a general policy, the
534 Committee will not provide permission to develop a new road across County lands for private access
535 unless it is mutually beneficial to the County. In general, the granting of access permits across
536 County Forest land will be discouraged, particularly if other feasible access to private lands exist. The
537 following stipulations will be adhered to before an "Access Permit" is granted.
538

- 539 A. Access across County Forest lands must be demonstrated by the applicant as the route of
540 last resort. Proposed uses must be documented by the applicant.
- 541 B. No legal easement will be granted, just permission to cross County Lands.
- 542 C. Permit is non-transferable. New landowners must apply to continue the land use agreement.
- 543 D. Access improvements and upgrading must be approved and will be supervised by the Forest
544 and Parks staff. Prior notification of three (3) days is required before work starts.
- 545 E. All wood cut from County Forestland is the property of Chippewa County.
- 546 F. Access must be open to the public and no gate may be erected on County Land.
- 547 G. The County continues full ownership of the improved access; however, it shall not be liable
548 for maintenance or upkeep of the access.
- 549 H. Permittee waives any rights to any declaration of ownership or interest in the access on
550 County Land as a result of this "Access Permit". The access permit is granted upon the
551 signature and any fees being charged by Chippewa County Forest and Parks Department.
- 552 I. A fee may be charged for an access permit.
- 553 J. The access permit may be canceled at anytime by giving reasonable written notice by the
554 County to the Permittee.
- 555 K. The County retains the right to use the access way at any time for any use and is under no
556 obligation to repair or maintain the access way.
- 557 L. The permittee agrees to reimburse the County for any unauthorized property damage.
- 558 M. Standard Land Use Agreement Access permit is included as an exhibit in Chapter 900.

559 **760 PUBLIC UTILITY ACCESS**

560 Access of the County Forest for utilities is covered under Chapter 500 Public Utilities.

561 **765 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR WATER QUALITY**

562 The layout and construction of any new road or trail situated on the County Forest shall adhere to
563 *Wisconsin's Best Management Practices for Water Quality* (PUB-FR-093-95). This access

564 management plan addresses the need and diversity level of forest roads and trails within the County
565 Forest. Chapter 6 of the BMP Manual provides guidelines for road construction. Soil disturbance
566 activities in these areas may require mitigating measures in excess of those currently listed in the
567 Best Management Practices manual PUB-FR-093-95 and in Chapter 500.3.8 (Soil Disturbance).
568 Wider buffers, sediment control structures, and water diversion techniques will be used as appropriate
569 in these sensitive areas.

570 **770 SIGNS**

571 Signs on the County Forest will be used discreetly to perform and function with minimal disruption to
572 the multiple uses of the Forest. Private signs promoting personal, commercial or political objectives
573 will not be permitted without authorization from Chippewa County. Signs erected by the County for
574 management purposes or by non-profit recreational trail groups will be as follows:

575
576

A. INFORMATIONAL TYPE SIGNS

- 577 1. Interpretive Signs - to educate the public about forest management practices.
- 578 2. Public Land Signs - to identify the land as Chippewa County Forest Property.
- 579 3. Trail Markers - to provide direction and safety to trail users.
- 580 4. Scientific, Historical or Geological Markers - to identify points of interest.
- 581 5. Recreational Facility Markers - to identify park entrances, etc.
- 582 6. Directional Markers.

583
584

B. REGULATORY TYPE SIGNS - REGULATE THE USE OF THE FOREST IN SPECIFIC AREAS.

585 770.1 SIGNING STANDARDS

586 To ensure signs will serve a purpose without damaging aesthetics, the following standards will
587 be maintained:

- 588 1. All signs will be mounted on treated wood posts, Carsonite type posts, or steel posts. NO
589 signs will be nailed to living trees.
- 590 2. Routed wood signs will be used wherever practical. Fiberboard or painted metal signs, when
591 used, will be of neat appearance.
- 592 3. Signs placed on snowmobile and ATV trails must conform to state standards.
- 593 4. All authorized signs shall be protected by ordinance from being damaged, defaced,
594 obstructed, removed, or possessed by unauthorized persons.
- 595 5. Forest and Parks staff shall remove all unauthorized signs erected by private parties on the
596 Forest. No compensation will be afforded for loss or damage to signs during removal.
597 Individuals erecting unauthorized signs may be prosecuted under s. 943.13(3), Wis. Stats.