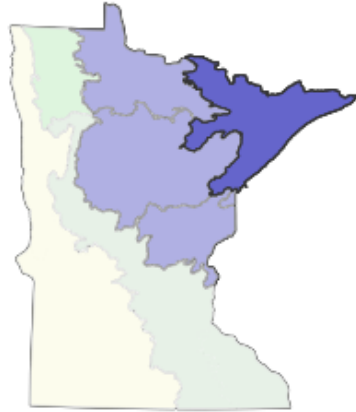


# Northern Superior Uplands

## Section Forest Resources Management Plan



### Preliminary Issues and Assessment Chapter 3: Land Ownership and Administration



Copyright 2015, State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources  
Prepared February 2015

Data and maps borrowed from the Minnesota Forest Resources Council Northeast Landscape Plan are credit as follows:

Minnesota Forest Resource Council. 2014. Northeast Landscape Conditions & Trends Report. Landscape Program Document #LT0114. Minnesota Forest Resource Council, St. Paul, Minnesota. Available online at the [Minnesota Forest Resource Council](http://www.frc.state.mn.us) web site [www.frc.state.mn.us](http://www.frc.state.mn.us)

Notes relating to this document:

This *Preliminary Issues and Assessment* document and color maps may be viewed as PDF files on the *Northern Northern Superior Uplands Section Forest Resources Management Plan* website at:

[Northern Superior Uplands SFRMP](#)

Information about the Section Resource Management Plan (SFRMP) process can be found at:

[Information about SFRMP](#)

Alternative Formats available on request.

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is available to all individuals regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, public assistance status, age, sexual orientation, disability or activity on behalf of a local human rights commission. Discrimination inquiries should be sent to Minnesota DNR, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4049; or the Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling 651-296-6157 (Metro Area) or 1-888-MINNDNR (MN Toll Free) or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf/TTY: 651- 296-5484 (Metro Area) or 1-800-657-3929 (Toll Free TTY).

Printed on FSC certified, recycled paper containing a minimum of 10% post-consumer waste.

## Contents

Land Ownership and Administration .....	4
Table 3.1 Land Ownership in the Northeast Landscape based on GAP data .....	5
Figure 3.1. Map showing land ownership in the Northeast Landscape, which includes the NSU .....	6
Table 3.2. Minnesota DNR Land Administration .....	7
School Trust Lands .....	8
Figure 3.2. School trust lands in the NE Landscape, 2007 .....	8
Table 3.3. School trust lands in the Northeast Landscape .....	9
Table 3.4. Acres of school trust lands in the NSU Section .....	10
Management Units in the NSU .....	11
Figure 3.3. This map shows management units of significance in the NSU Section .....	11

## Land Ownership and Administration

Land Ownership and Administration is challenging to display because of the way the data are collected and presented. There are a number of different data sets that could be used, each of which has a unique set of challenges and benefits. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Northern Superior Uplands (NSU) Section Forest Resource Management Planning (SFRMP) team has taken advantage of the enormous body of work undertaken recently by the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) Landscape Planning Program. The MFRC is finalizing the revision of the Northeast (NE) Landscape Plan, which includes the entire NSU Section, plus some additional lands. The NSU makes up about 75 percent of the NE Landscape, so those data do not match exactly, but in a number of cases they serve a valuable purpose in providing an overview of the character of the landscape when specific site-level data are not available.

Thirty-five percent of the land area in the NE Landscape is privately owned; another 64 percent is publicly owned and less than one percent is owned by sovereign Indian nations. The 1854 Treaty ceded territory covers approximately 81 percent of the NE Landscape.

St. Louis, Lake, and Cook Counties are the three main county land managers in the NSU Section.

Minnesota DNR administers just under one million acres in the NE Landscape; the Division of Forestry administers the majority of those acres through the Two Harbors, Littlefork, Hibbing, Tower-Orr, and Cloquet Forestry Areas.

The maps and charts from the NE Landscape Plan were borrowed from the MFRC Northeast Landscape Committee and carry the MFRC logo or a Data Source line acknowledging the source of the data.

**Table 3.1. Land Ownership in the Northeast Landscape based on GAP data**

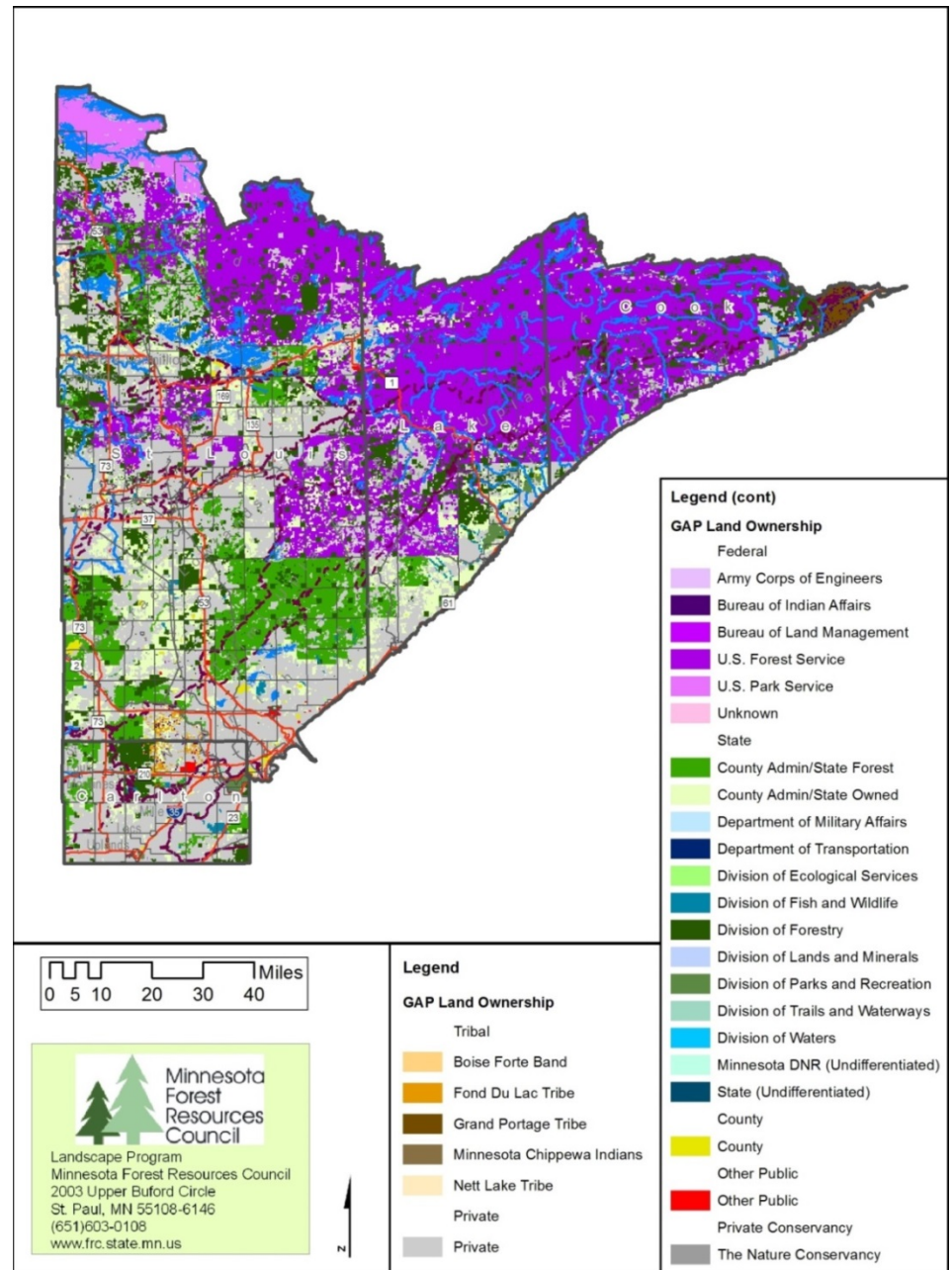
Table columns display the name of the land owner, the Public Ownership by agency, the acres in each ownership category, and the percentage of the total land area. Public ownership is 65 percent of the area; tribal 0.8 percent; private 35 percent. Data Source: Minnesota Data Deli (compiled by Minnesota Forest Resources Council).

Owner Description	GAP Public Ownership	Acres	% of Total
Federal	Army Corps of Engineers	34	0.0
	Bureau of Indian Affairs	16,772	0.2
	Bureau of Land Management	1,518	0.0
	U.S. Forest Service	2,334,185	31.7
	U.S. Park Service	180,810	2.5
	Unknown	11,692	0.2
<b>Total Federal</b>		<b>2,545,011</b>	<b>34.6</b>
State	County Admin/State Forest	612,819	8.3
	County Admin/State Owned	539,532	7.3
	Department of Military Affairs	42	0.0
	Department of Transportation	1,493	0.0
	Division of Ecological Services	2,872	0.0
	Division of Fish and Wildlife	27,949	0.4
	Division of Forestry	897,874	12.2
	Division of Lands and Minerals	1,989	0.0
	Division of Parks and Recreation	42,191	0.6
	Division of Trails and Waterways	3,351	0.0
	Division of Waters	253	0.0
	Minnesota DNR (Undifferentiated)	152	0.0
	State (Undifferentiated)	2,609	0.0
<b>Total State</b>		<b>2,133,125</b>	<b>29.0</b>
County	County	31,960	0.4
<b>Total County</b>		<b>31,960</b>	<b>0.4</b>
Other Public	Other Public	16,235	0.2
<b>Total Other Public</b>		<b>16,235</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Total Public Ownership</b>		<b>4,726,330</b>	<b>64.2</b>
Tribal	Bois Forte Band, Vermilion	652	0.0
	Fond Du Lac Tribe	18,440	0.3
	Grand Portage Tribe	32,409	0.4
	Minnesota Chippewa Indians	678	0.0
	Bois Forte Band, Nett Lake	9,513	0.1
<b>Total Tribal</b>		<b>61,693</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Private Conservancy	The Nature Conservancy	9,962	0.1
Private	Private	2,565,659	34.8
<b>Total Private Ownership</b>		<b>2,575,621</b>	<b>35.0</b>
<b>Total Project Area</b>		<b>7,363,644</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 3.1. Map showing land ownership in the Northeast Landscape, which includes the NSU**

Colors indicate the GAP land ownership classes in this map.

Data Source: Minnesota Data Deli (compiled by Minnesota Forest Resources Council).



**Table 3.2. Minnesota DNR Land Administration**

Columns in this table display the Minnesota DNR divisions and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, the acreage of land each administers, and the percentage of total DNR-administered land in the Section. The greatest number of acres (87 percent) is administered by the Division of Forestry; the total land area administered by DNR in the Section is about 710,000 acres.

<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Minnesota DNR Division</b>		
<i>Eco/Water Resources</i>	5,278	<1
<i>Wildlife Section</i>	5,128	<1
<i>Forestry</i>	620,889	87
<i>Parks</i>	30,068	4
<i>Trails &amp; Waterways</i>	12,817	2
<i>Fisheries Section</i>	13,206	2
<i>Minerals</i>	1,954	<1
BWCA	20,955	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>710,295</b>	<b>100</b>

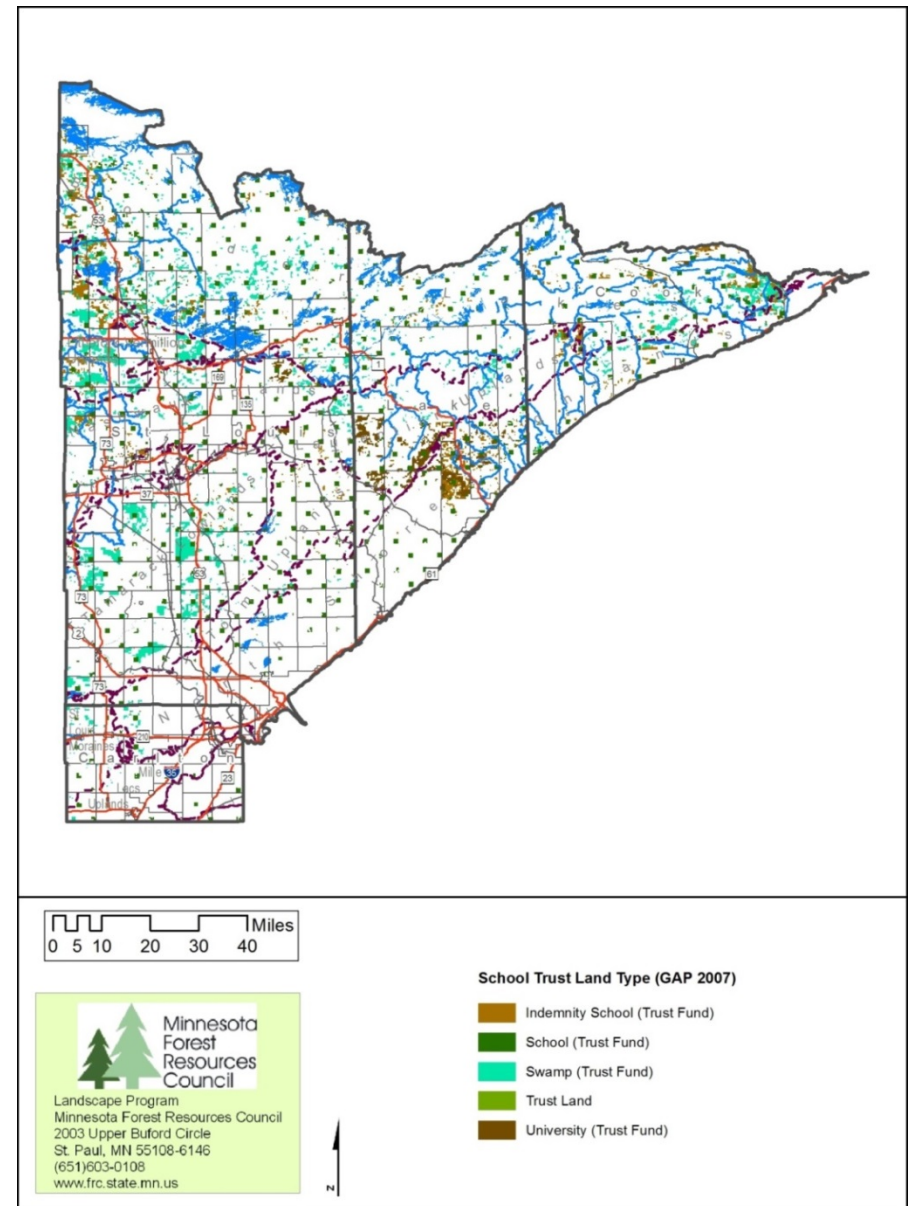
### Figure 3.2. School trust lands in the NE Landscape, 2007

Five categories of school trust land in the Northeast landscape are color coded. Source: *Minnesota DNR GIS Data Deli.*

### School Trust Lands

When Minnesota became a state in 1858, sections 16 and 36 of every township were granted to Minnesota from the federal government to support schools. Alternative sections, referred to as Indemnity Lands, were granted when sections 16 and 36 had already been claimed, were reserved for an Indian reservation, or were under water. The grant ultimately resulted in 2.9 million acres being given to the state for the use of the public schools and the Minnesota Constitution established the Permanent School Fund (PSF) to ensure long-term funding would be generated from accumulated revenues from the land for public education. As a result, these lands are owned by the state in trust for all public schools of Minnesota, they are not owned by the local school district. Also included in school trust lands today are remaining lands from two other federal land grants: the Swampland grant of about 4.7 million acres in 1860, and the Internal Improvement grant of 500,000 acres in 1866.

By 1900, much of this land had been sold to support public schools. Today roughly 2.4 million acres (31 percent of the original 8.1 million acres) of school trust lands and an additional 1 million acres of mineral rights remain and are managed by the DNR. The vast majority of these lands are located in the northern forested portion of the state with nearly 800,000 (33 percent) acres found in the Northeast Landscape, accounting for almost 11 percent of the regional land cover (Table 3.3). Almost 11 percent of the NE landscape is classified as school trust land of one kind or another, compared to 4.4 percent statewide.





In 2013, the Minnesota Legislature established the 12-member Legislative Permanent School Fund Commission to advise the DNR and the school trust lands director on the management of permanent school fund land and review legislation affecting permanent school fund land. The Commission is required to review statutes and recommend any changes necessary for provident utilization of school trust lands. It reports annually to the Legislature with recommendations for management of school trust fund lands to secure long-term economic return for the permanent school fund. The impact of this new commission on management of school trust lands in Northeast Minnesota is unknown but there may be changes in ownership and/or management of these lands in the near future.

For more information visit the [Minnesota DNR School Trust Lands](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/school_land/index.html) web site: [www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/school\\_land/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/school_land/index.html)

### Table 3.3. School trust lands in the Northeast Landscape

The rows in this table display the seven different classifications of school trust land, along with the acreage of school trust land in the NE landscape (which includes the NSU), the acreage of school trust land in the State as a whole, and the percentages of school trust land in the NE landscape and the State, respectively. Totals acreages are provided in the bottom two rows. *Data Source: Minnesota Data Deli (compiled by Minnesota Forest Resources Council).*

School Trust Land Type (GAP Land Ownership 2007)	Northeast Landscape		Minnesota	
	Acres	% of Total	Acres	% of Total
Indemnity School (Trust Fund)	146,339	2.0	286,344	0.5
Internal Imp (Trust Fund)	--	--	6,093	0.0
School (Trust Fund)	270,259	3.7	641,892	1.2
Swamp (Trust Fund)	315,432	4.3	1,376,894	2.5
Trans. School (Trust Fund)	--	--	80	0.0
Trust Land	73	0.0	73	0.0
University (Trust Fund)	67,413	0.9	80,772	0.1
<b>Total Trust Lands</b>	<b>799,515</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>2,392,148</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Totals Region and State</b>	<b>7,363,644</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>53,997,289</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 3.4. Acres of school trust lands in the NSU Section**

The first column lists the subsections that make up the NSU Section; the second and third columns list Trust and Non-trust land by subsection; the third column lists percentages by subsection based on total acres on state-administered land. Source: *DNR Division of Forestry, Forest Inventory Module, 2014.*

Subsection Name	Trust Acres	Non-Trust Acres	% of Subsection
Border Lakes	262,341	48,548	84%
Laurentian Uplands	76,170	4,421	95%
Nashwauk Uplands	67,096	19,215	78%
North Shore Highlands	117,684	83,711	58%
Toimi Uplands	23,745	7,358	76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>547,036</b>	<b>163,253</b>	<b>77%</b>

## Management Units in the NSU

The NSU includes a number of management units on State, federal, and tribal land that may or may not be included in the SFRMP process. They may have special statutory or policy attributes that make them different from other state forest lands.

**Figure 3.3. This map shows management units of significance in the NSU Section**

Shown in color on this map are Indian Reservations, Wildlife Management Areas, State Parks, National Forests, National Parks, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, Ruffed Grouse Management Areas, and Scientific and Natural Areas. Major highways and cities in the Section are also displayed.

