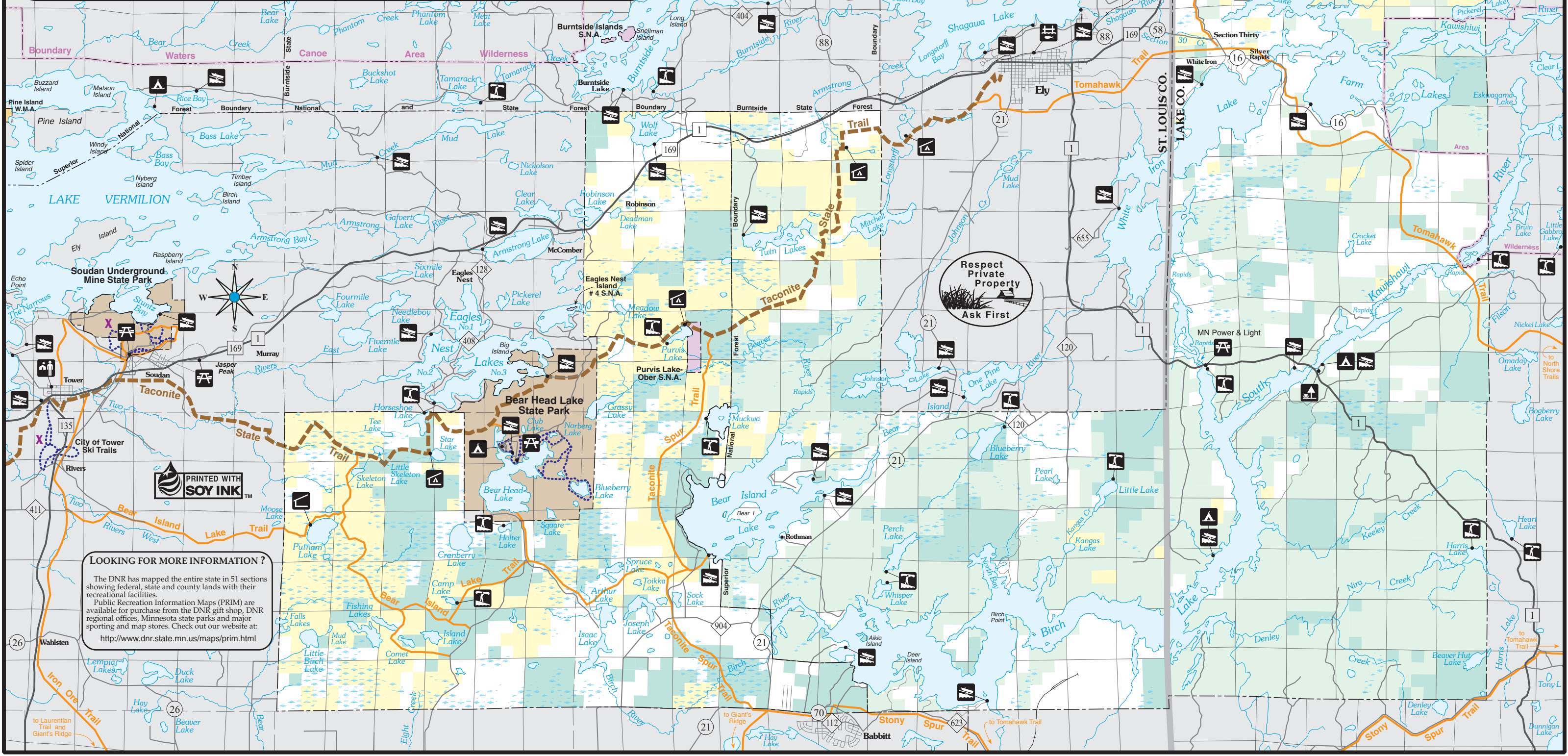
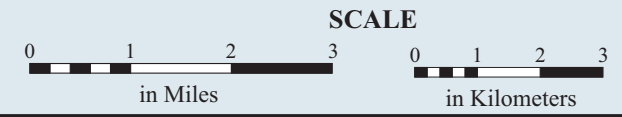


# Bear Island State Forest



OWNERSHIP		TRAILS		FACILITIES	
	State Forest Land		State Trail (snowmobiles)		Shelter
	National Forest Land		Snowmobile		Shelter/Campsite
	County Land		Non-Motorized Ski Touring Hiking/Walking		Boat Ramp
	Private Land within forest bounds				Carry-in Access
	State Park Land				Picnic Area
	Scientific & Natural Area				Parking
	Wildlife Management Area Land				Fishing Pier



**LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION ?**

The DNR has mapped the entire state in 51 sections showing federal, state and county lands with their recreational facilities. Public Recreation Information Maps (PRIM) are available for purchase from the DNR gift shop, DNR regional offices, Minnesota state parks and major sporting and map stores. Check out our website at: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/maps/prim.html>

# BEAR ISLAND STATE FOREST

## TRAIL MAP

Minnesota Department  
of Natural Resources

This information is available in  
alternative format upon request.



**B**ear Island State Forest is located in northern St. Louis and Lake counties. It is adjacent to the Superior National Forest and Boundary Waters Canoe Area and surrounded by the towns of Ely, Babbitt and Tower-Soudan. The principal access roads through the forest are U.S. 169 and County Highway 21 from Virginia and State Highway 1 from the north shore of Lake Superior.

The terrain of the area is often steep and rocky. Very little of the land is suitable for agriculture, however the abundance of lakes and rivers provide excellent recreational opportunities.

In the late 1800s to early 1900s millions of board feet of virgin white pine was harvested. Subsequent burning replaced these pine stands with aspen, birch and jack pine which now comprise most of the upland timber types.

### FOREST MANAGEMENT

Minnesota's state forests provide timber and other forest crops, provide outdoor recreation, protect watersheds and perpetuate rare and distinctive species of native flora and fauna. State forests are multiple use areas that are managed to provide a sustained yield of renewable resources while maintaining or improving the forest environment. In the Bear Island State Forest approximately 250 acres of timber are harvested per year. There are 170 acres of land artificially regenerated to coniferous forest through planting and seeding. Timber stand improvement amounts to 140 acres per year, this is mostly done through release of conifer plantations.

### RECREATION FACILITIES

The recreational facilities within Bear Island State Forest include a winter access area, state forest snowmobile trails and the Taconite State Trail which goes from Ely to Grand Rapids.

Bear Island water access can be reached from Babbitt by taking County Road 70 west 2 miles, County Road 21 north 2 miles, County Road 904 west 1-1/2 miles, then County Road 490 north 1-1/2 miles.

Within Bear Island State Forest there is access to 27.4 miles of marked and groomed snowmobile trail. The Bear Island Lake Trail can be accessed from within the State Forest boundaries. Access to the Taconite Trail is at Ely, Bear Head Lake State Park and Soudan Underground Mine State Park.

### STATE FOREST RULES

State forest lands are generally open for all types of outdoor recreation including, hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and picking fruit and mushrooms.

Rules and laws regulate some activities on forest lands. A partial list is included below. A complete list is available from the Department of Natural Resources.

**Firewood** -Dead wood may be gathered for campfires on site. Cutting or removing wood or forest products for home or commercial use requires a permit.

**Campfires** -Recreational fires of less than 3 ft. diameter, in an area cleared of combustible materials for 5 ft. around the fire, do not require a permit. Other open burning is regulated by permit.

**Firearms** -Firearms may be discharged in compliance with the law on forest lands that are not posted closed. Firearms must be unloaded and cased while in and within 200 feet of a forest recreation area (campground, day use area, parking area, etc.) EXCEPT: during seasons open for hunting, a person may carry an unloaded, uncased firearm or strung bow from a forest recreation area to hunt outside the area.

**Camping** -Camping on forest lands outside of developed campgrounds is permitted with some conditions. See complete rules.

**Personal Property** -Personal property may not be left or positioned so as to obstruct use of a road or trail. Personal property left unattended for 14 days shall be deemed abandoned.

**Special rules apply in forest campgrounds and day use areas. They are not included here.**

**TRAILS** -Motor vehicle and off road rules

**Classified Forest Lands.** State forest lands are classified by the commissioner for purposes

of motor vehicle use. Motor vehicle use is regulated as follows:

#### State Forest Lands Classified as **Managed**:

- Motor vehicles may operate **only** on forest roads and forest trails **unless** they are posted and designated **closed**.  
\*Bear Island State Forest is classified as **MANAGED**.

#### State Forest Lands Classified as **Limited**:

- Motor vehicles may operate on forest roads, **unless** they are posted and designated **closed**.
- Motor vehicles may operate on forest trails or areas that are **posted and designated open**. Trails that are not posted open for motor vehicles are designated as non-motorized.

- Exception: Persons lawfully engaged in hunting big game or constructing hunting stands during October, November and December, retrieving big game during September, or trapping during open seasons, may use ATVs off forest trails in a manner consistent with the general operating restrictions. This exception does not apply in the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood Forest.

#### State Forest Lands Classified as **Closed**:

- Motor vehicles and snowmobiles are **not allowed** except:
  - \* Vehicles licensed for highway use may use forest roads that are not posted or gated closed.
  - \* Vehicles may operate on frozen public waters where it is not otherwise prohibited.
  - \* Snowmobiles may operate on designated trails.

#### General Operating Restrictions

**- anywhere on state forest lands that motor vehicles are allowed.**

- No motor vehicle operation is allowed on designated non-motorized trails, unless also posted open for a motorized use.
- No motor vehicle operation is allowed on or over the beds of lakes, rivers or streams except:
  - \* When the water body is ice covered.
  - \* On a bridge, culvert or designated low water crossing.
- Motor vehicles or snowmobiles may not operate on forest lands in a manner that causes erosion or rutting, damages, or

destroys trees or growing crops. The rutting provision does not apply on designated motorized trails.

- Motor vehicles or snowmobiles may not operate within the boundaries of an area that is posted and designated as closed to such use.
- Motor vehicles on state forest roads must travel at a reasonable and prudent speed; obey posted speed limits, parking and traffic regulation signs; observe road closures; and may not operate in a manner that causes damage to the road, land or other natural resources.

**NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS** - Trails are generally open to non-motorized uses, but may be limited by postings which must be observed.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Forestry/Trails and Waterways Unit  
Information Center

500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040  
(651) 296-6699

Or TOLL FREE from within Minnesota  
1-888-MINNDNR

Telephone Device for the Hearing Impaired:  
(651) 296-5484

Orr Area Forest Supervisor  
Orr, MN 55771

(218) 757-3274

#### EMERGENCY SERVICE - DIAL 911

St. Louis County Sheriff  
209 East Chapman Street

Ely, MN 55731

(218) 365-3344

Ely Bloomenson Community Hospital

328 West Conan

Ely, MN 55731

(218) 365-3271

Ely Ambulance

(218) 365-3111

"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 or religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age or disability. Discrimination inquires should be sent to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4031; or the Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240."

© 10/2002 by State of Minnesota,  
Department of Natural Resources

