BELTRAMI ISLAND STATE FOREST
703,382 ACRES  •  ESTABLISHED 1931

FOREST LANDSCAPE: The “island” in the forest’s name refers to small, teardrop-shaped islands surrounded by miles of peat bog that was created when glacial Lake Agassiz drained after glaciers melted 10,000 years ago. Observant visitors might detect the shorelines of this ancient lake—several low, sandy ridges that extend in a general northwest-southeast direction in the forest. Today, pine covers those ridges.

A WORKING FOREST: From year to year, you may see changes in this forest. The DNR manages the trees, water, and wildlife in state forests to keep them healthy and meet recreational, environmental, and economic goals. Trees are harvested to make a variety of products, such as lumber and building materials, pulp for making paper, pallets, fencing, and telephone poles. Through careful planning, harvesting, and planting, land managers work to improve habitat for white-tailed deer, bear, grouse, woodcock, furbearers, waterfowl, and songbirds. The DNR manages state forests for everyone to prevent wildfires and keep our air and water clean.

HISTORY: American Indians have lived in the Beltrami Island area for thousands of years. French explorers arrived in the 1730s, searching for a route to the Pacific. The British-owned Hudson’s Bay Company took over in 1763, and American control with the Treaty of 1818. Under the Old Crossing Treaty of 1863, much of northwestern Minnesota was reserved for the Ojibwe people, and today the Red Lake Band retains many parcels within the forest. Extensive ditching was done by Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) crews in the 1930s to drain peatlands for agriculture, but the sandy soils and extensive swamps proved unsuitable for farming. By 1940 most settlers left. Abandoned homesteads and cemeteries can be found in the forest. Norris Camp, a CCC camp established in 1936, retains many of the original buildings and now serves as the headquarters of the Red Lake Wildlife Management Area. It also served as a Resettlement Administration Camp that helped plant abandoned farm fields back to pine forests.

TREES: Aspen and lowland conifers such as spruce, tamarack, and cedar grow on much of the forest. Red pine, aspen, and jack pine grow on better-drained soils. Smaller acreages of birch, white pine, and hardwoods such as ash and elm are interspersed. The Roosevelt area between the towns of Williams and Warroad is one of the few places to find red maple in extreme northwestern Minnesota.

WILDLIFE: White-tailed deer, black bear, gray wolf, red fox, marten, fisher, otter, elk, loon, and loons can be found in the forest. Birders have observed more than 250 bird species in the area, including 23 species of warblers. Birders may also see Connecticut warblers, great gray owls, northern hawk owls, short-eared owls, northern goshawks, black-backed woodpeckers, gray jays, white-winged and red crossbills, and boreal chickadees. The area is also home to hundreds of species of dragonflies, moths, butterflies, and beetles.

PUT THIS MAP ON YOUR DEVICE

This map is geo-referenced. Download an app such as the free Avenza app on your device and use it to open the geoPDF. The app will place a blue locator dot on the map wherever you take your phone, even if you are out of cellular range. The information in this map is dynamic and may change over time. The Minnesota DNR is not liable for improper or incorrect use of the data described and/or contained. The data and related graphics are not legal documents, and are protected by copyright.

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BELTRAMI ISLAND

STATE FOREST

CAMPING AND RECREATION AREAS

whether you're riding or walking, tread lightly on the land.

ALWAYS STAY ON SIGNED TRAILS

- Be courteous to others, respect private property, and obey the law.
- Waterfowl hunting and birdwatching. Islands of mostly aspen forest and surrounded by brushlands are in the
- The Red Lake Band of Chippewa owns lands scattered throughout the forest. Any use of Band land by non-band
- During seasons open for hunting, a
- Fishing is prohibited in Upper Red Lake within tributary channels.
- Hunting and trapping are allowed during the appropriate season and with the correct license. State forests and
- Hunting and fishing are allowed.
- Some SNAs do not have trails, and none have restrooms or drinking water. While SNAs do not
- The northern unit of this recreation area near the southeast border of the state forest features a ten-mile long back
- Avoid spreading invasive organisms such as zebra mussel larvae or other aquatic organisms
- This 185-acre SNA takes its name from an old logging camp that once thrived in the area. While old-growth red
- Some SNA sites are also found. In 1995 a 1.4-acre fenced deer exclosure was erected for researchers interested in documenting

NEARBY RECREATION AREAS

GREAT LAKE FOREST LOCATION

- WDA, ATV's, OHV's, and OHVs must have current registration on a tribal pass.
- Removing mud and seeds from clothes, pets, boots, gear, and vehicles.
- Highway-licensed vehicles and OHVs are allowed on any road unless posted closed. Any use of Band land by non-band
- Collecting large amounts of fuelwood to take home for personal use or sale requires a permit. Get permits
- This 400-acre area includes 193 acres of forested land and 177 acres of lakes. Bemis Hill offers picnic tables,
- Camping and day-use areas. There are picnic tables, horseshoe pits, fire rings, and flush toilets.
- This rustic camping area has two outhouses during hunting season, picnic tables, fire rings and a water pump. No
- This day-use area is available for broadcast radios and other similar devices. There are no broadcast radios,
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- Picnic tables, fire rings, and flush toilets are available. No designated camping-grounds or wash areas.
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