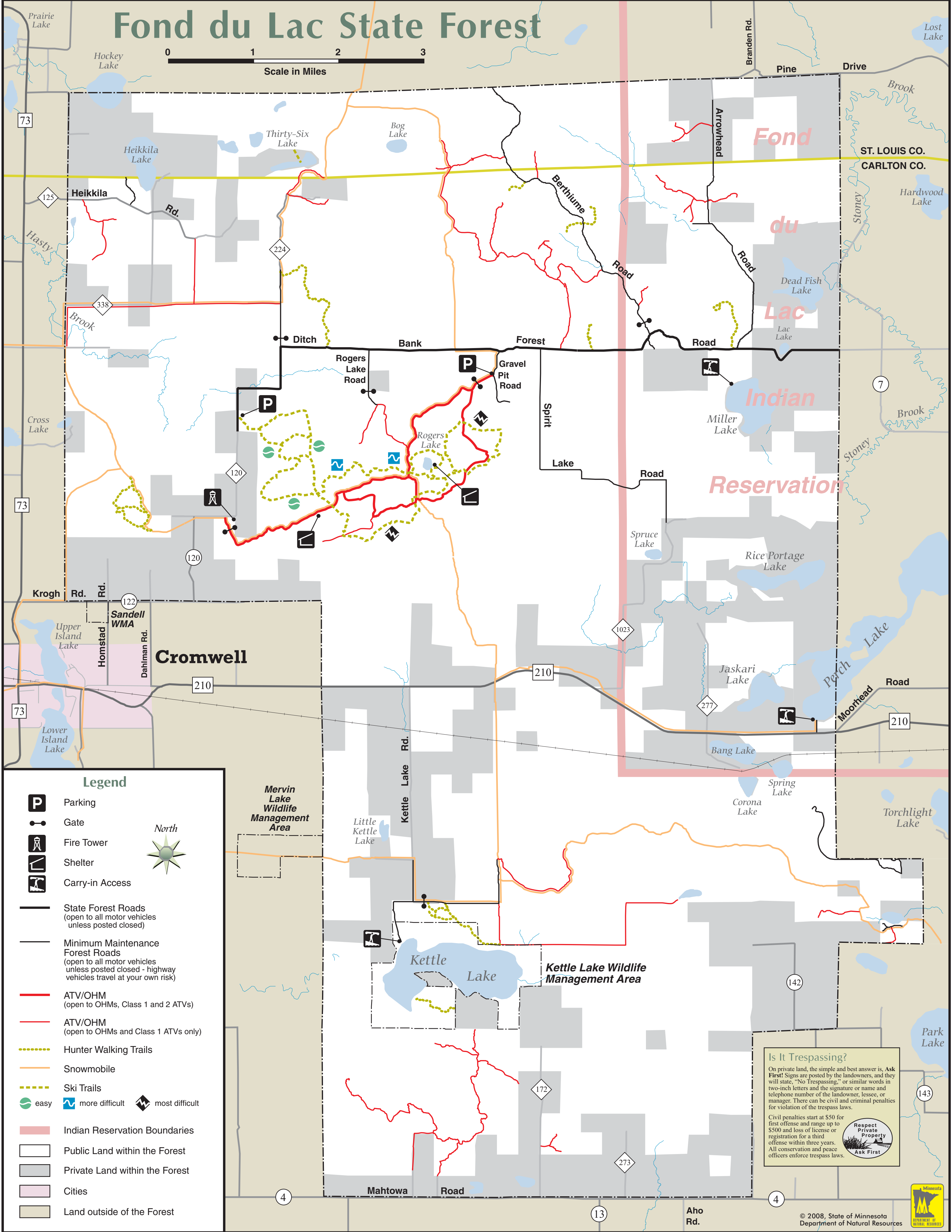


# Fond du Lac State Forest



## Legend

- Parking
- Gate
- Fire Tower
- Shelter
- Carry-in Access
- State Forest Roads  
(open to all motor vehicles unless posted closed)
- Minimum Maintenance Forest Roads  
(open to all motor vehicles unless posted closed - highway vehicles travel at your own risk)
- ATV/OHM  
(open to OHMs, Class 1 and 2 ATVs)
- ATV/OHM  
(open to OHMs and Class 1 ATVs only)
- Hunter Walking Trails
- Snowmobile
- Ski Trails
- easy
- more difficult
- most difficult
- Indian Reservation Boundaries
- Public Land within the Forest
- Private Land within the Forest
- Cities
- Land outside of the Forest



**Is It Trespassing?**

On private land, the simple and best answer is, Ask First! Signs are posted by the landowners, and they will state, "No Trespassing," or similar words in two-inch letters and the signature or name and telephone number of the landowner, lessee, or manager. There can be civil and criminal penalties for violation of the trespass laws.

Civil penalties start at \$50 for first offense and range up to \$500 and loss of license or registration for a third offense within three years. All conservation and peace officers enforce trespass laws.



# Fond du Lac State Forest

A guide to recreational opportunities in Minnesota state forests



## About the Forest

Size: 64,505 acres Year Created: 1931

**Forest Landscape:** The terrain in the forest is flat to rolling. Low areas consist of lowland conifers, alder-willow brushlands, and peat bogs. Kettle Lake and numerous smaller lakes are contained within the forest.

**Unique Features:** The Kettle Lake Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is within forest boundaries and the Sandell, Sawyer, and Mervin Lake WMAs are adjacent to or near the forest. The forest is a wetland/forest complex with several large, shallow wild rice lakes and extensive areas of marsh and wooded swamp. The Fond du Lac Indian Reservation overlaps the forest on its east side. DNR forest and wildlife managers work closely with the Carlton and St. Louis county land departments and Fond du Lac Resource Management so management activities in the forest and WMAs benefit both wildlife and plant species.

**Management Activities:** Timber harvesting, reforestation, wildlife habitat improvement, and recreational development occur in the forest. Wildlife management includes: creating wildlife openings in the forest to produce forage and browse for deer, improving wild rice production, and developing large blocks of brushland habitat for openland wildlife species. An extensive network of hunter-walking trails is also maintained in the forest. The DNR and Fond du Lac Resource Management protects the forest and surrounding areas from wildfires.

**History:** A large portion of the land that is now Fond du Lac State Forest was swept by the great Cloquet Fire of 1918 and was periodically burned after that to create or maintain clearings until the 1930s. A ditch system was dug in the area from 1916-1920 to drain the lowlands and facilitate settling. Nearly one-third of what is now the forest was cleared and settled by the early 1920s. By the mid 1920s, however, land values were declining and the ditching assessments were generally twice the market value of the land. Within three years the majority of settlers had abandoned their holdings and most of this land reverted to the county for nonpayment of taxes.

Minnesota Laws of 1931 established several state forests by legal descriptions only. The Fond du Lac State Forest was one of these and did not get its name "officially" in the law books until 1933. Over the years, the Minnesota Legislature enlarged the original forest reserve to its present size. The DNR manages 70 percent of the area, with the rest under county, corporate, and private ownership.

## Look for ... Predominant Tree Species:

The low, swampy areas of the forest are covered with tamarack, black spruce, black ash, and northern white cedar. The upland areas support quaking and bigtooth aspen, balsam poplar, paper birch, and northern hardwood stands composed of sugar and red maple, basswood, and red oak. Smaller acreages are covered by balsam fir, white spruce, and red, white, and jack pine. The forest contains 66 acres of black ash, 56 acres of northern hardwoods, and 71 acres of oak that are designated old growth and protected from harvesting and other management activities.

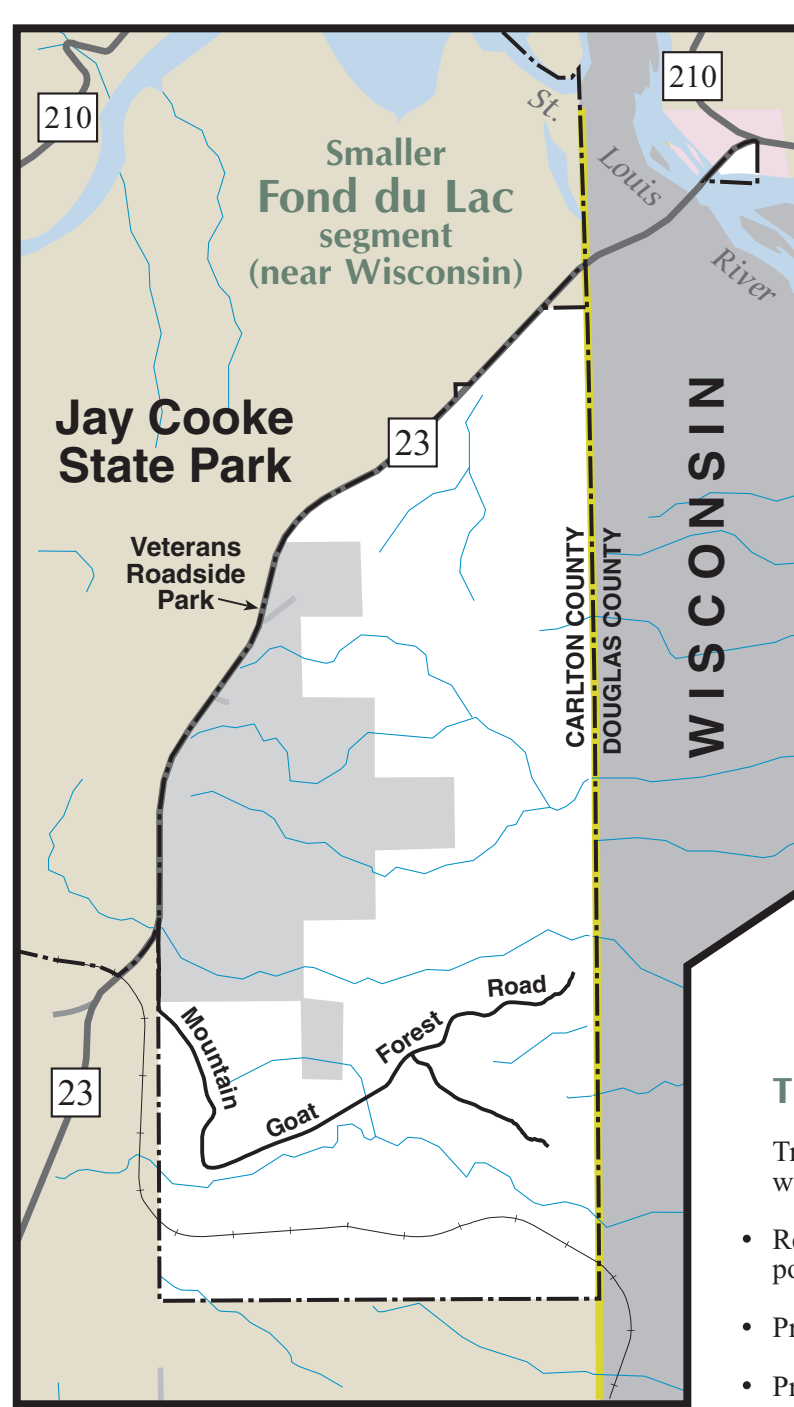
**Wildlife:** White-tailed deer, moose, bear, gray wolves, coyotes, bobcats, raccoons, fisher, pine marten, mink, otters, beaver, muskrat, ruffed and sharp-tailed grouse, and woodcock can be found in the forest. In the spring and fall, migrating waterfowl can be seen on the lakes and wetlands. Many nongame bird species (bald eagles, sandhill cranes, trumpeter swans, great gray owls, and seasonal songbirds) and small mammal species can also be seen in the forest.

**Recreation:** There are no campgrounds within the forest.

Dispersed camping is allowed as long as state forest rules are followed, except in the WMA where camping is prohibited. The forest is classified as "limited" to off-highway vehicles (OHVs), including all-terrain vehicles and off-highway motorcycles (see OHV information at right). This means that all trails available for these motorized activities will be posted. Any trail not posted is off limits to OHV use. The soils in the forest are easily rutted and compacted when wet, so OHV use will be carefully controlled. This forest is not a good destination location for recreational OHV riding. OHV use is not allowed in the WMA.

Snowmobile and ski trails can also be found in the forest. The trailhead for the snowmobile trail is on the south side of County Road 120 (at the Cromwell Fire Tower), just three miles north of Highway 210. The trailhead for the ski trail is another 1.25 miles further north on the east side of the road.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping, in accordance with state regulations, are allowed on all public land within the state forest, including the WMA. Forest roads are open year-round to facilitate access to forest areas; however, there can be seasonal restrictions where roads are closed to minimize damage during spring breakup. Wild rice harvesting, in accordance with state regulations, is allowed on Kettle Lake. Wild rice harvesting within the Fond du Lac Indian Reservation, however, is only open to band members, but the lakes are open to the general public for hunting and fishing.



## Keep Trees a Healthy Part of Your World!

- Plant trees. Make sure they are right for the site.
- Help keep trees healthy. For example: Water trees during dry periods; avoid wounding bark with lawn mowers and weed whips; stake small-diameter, newly planted trees to give them added support; mulch trees to help retain moisture in the soil.
- Celebrate Arbor Day and Arbor Month. In Minnesota, Arbor Day is the last Friday in April and May is Arbor Month.
- Join or establish a local tree committee or board.
- Go to [mndnr.gov/treecare](http://mndnr.gov/treecare), Minnesota's one-stop Web site for information on trees, tree care, and tree-related organizations.

## The Value of Trees

Trees help humans and other living things in many ways. Among them, they:

- Remove carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) and other pollutants from the air.
- Produce oxygen.
- Provide food and shelter for wildlife.
- Provide wood products.
- Add beauty to the landscape.
- Provide a pleasant environment for recreation.
- Help reduce residential energy consumption by shading homes in summer and sheltering them from wind in winter.
- Help protect streams and lakes by reducing runoff.
- Reduce noise pollution by absorbing sound.
- Increase property values.

Research has shown that trees can provide up to \$7 in benefits each year for every \$1 invested in caring for them. Benefits include increased property values, pollution control, and energy savings.



## Be Safe With Campfires!

- Let your fire burn out completely to ashes or very small coals.
- Drench the fire with water, stir the ashes and coals, and wet again.
- Make sure any food, plastics, or foil is packed out as garbage.
- When your fire is extinguished completely, it should be cold to the touch.

## Two Kinds of Trees

Minnesota is home to 52 native tree species and they can be divided into two main types: deciduous and coniferous.

Deciduous trees drop their leaves each autumn. Deciduous trees are sometimes called angiosperms, broadleaf trees, or hardwoods. Oaks, maples, and elms are deciduous trees.

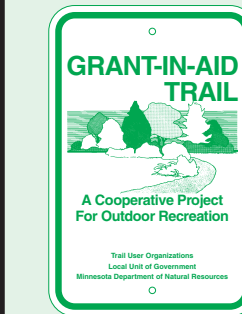
Coniferous trees are trees that produce seeds without fruits or nuts. Most coniferous trees bear seeds in cones, have needles instead of broad leaves, and keep their needles in winter. Coniferous trees are also called gymnosperms, evergreens, or softwoods. Spruces, firs, and pines are coniferous trees.

## Snowmobile Laws

Alcohol, nighttime driving, and high speeds are the main causes of snowmobile fatalities. Conservation officers remind snowmobilers:

- Operating a snowmobile while intoxicated is unlawful.
- 50 miles per hour is the maximum legal speed for snowmobiling on frozen public waters and DNR-controlled lands (conditions permitting, when no other restrictions apply).

For complete legal information see "Minnesota Snowmobile Safety Laws, Rules, and Regulations," available from DNR Information Center and DNR Licensing Bureau.



## The Grant-In-Aid Trail System

Through efforts of snowmobile club volunteers across the state, Minnesotans enjoy more than 20,000 miles of groomed snowmobile trails. The maintenance of 90 percent of these trails is the responsibility of local snowmobile clubs and Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association (MnUSA).

Stay on the trails with the help of orange reassuring blazers, which are posted along the route.



## Welcome

You are part of a growing number of people who enjoy using off-highway vehicles (OHVs) for trail riding, off-road transportation, competition, and other activities. Your attitude toward your surroundings and your behavior as a rider affect the attitudes of other outdoor users, landowners, and lawmakers.

Tread lightly on the environment, be courteous to others, respect private property, and obey the law. By doing these things you contribute to the positive image of off-highway vehicle activities.



For more information on off-highway riding and opportunities, visit: [FindTheTrails.com](http://FindTheTrails.com)

## OHV Use on State Forest Lands

State forest lands are classified by the commissioner for purposes of motor vehicle use.

The DNR is conducting a review of state forests that currently permit off-highway vehicle use. Following the review, these forests may be reclassified as either "managed," "limited," or "closed" to OHV use.

Please check for trail closures before you leave at: [www.dnr.state.mn.us/trailconditions/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/trailconditions/index.html)

For up-to-date information, check [www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/ohv/designation/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/ohv/designation/index.html)

## FOND DU LAC STATE FOREST IS CLASSIFIED AS LIMITED

Motor vehicles may operate on forest roads, unless they are posted and designated closed.

Motor vehicles may operate ONLY on forest trails or areas that are posted and designated open.\*

\* Exception: Persons lawfully engaged in hunting big game or constructing hunting stands during October, November, and December, or trapping during open seasons, may use all-terrain vehicles off forest trails in a manner consistent with the general operating restrictions.

## Motorized restrictions on state forest lands

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 or 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.

## Motorized restrictions on state forest lands cont.

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.

No person shall construct an unauthorized permanent trail on forest lands.

## Safety First!

- Read the owner's manual and know your vehicle.
- Check your vehicle before you ride.
- Don't lend your vehicle to unskilled riders.
- Supervise young or inexperienced riders.
- Never carry a passenger on vehicles intended for one person.
- Ride straight—no alcohol or drugs.
- Let trail conditions determine safe speeds.
- Stay to the right on trails.
- Stay away from open water and thin ice.
- Know the weather forecast.
- Use your taillight and headlight.
- Maintain safe distances when riding with others.
- Reduce your speed when riding at night.
- Yield to other motor vehicles and trail users.



## ATV Youthful Operators

It is unlawful for anyone in control of an ATV to permit it to be operated contrary to the following requirements:

| Age           | Requirement  |
|---------------|--|
| Under 10      | May operate only on private property with permission of the owner.   |
| 10 and 11     | May operate only on private property with permission of the owner.<br>May operate an ATV up to 90cc on public lands and frozen waters if accompanied by parent or legal guardian.<br>Must wear an approved helmet while operating on public lands and frozen waters.   |
| 12 through 15 | ATV safety certificate valid only after successfully completing BOTH the independent study and riding safety training components, and must be able to properly reach and control the handle bars and foot pegs while sitting upright on the seat.<br>May operate an ATV on public lands and frozen waters and make direct crossing of roadways with a valid safety certificate ONLY when accompanied on another ATV by a person 18 or over who has a valid driver's license.<br>Must wear approved helmet while operating on public lands and frozen waters, and when crossing road rights-of-way. |
| 16 and 17     | Must successfully complete the ATV independent study course component before operating on public lands.<br>May operate an ATV on public lands and frozen public waters without a safety certificate.<br>Must have a valid driver's license to make a direct crossing of a roadway or operated on road rights-of-way.<br>Must wear approved helmet while operating on public lands, frozen public waters, and on road rights-of-way.  |

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

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Photos provided by DNR. Cover photo: smooth wild rose, american vetch and twining honeysuckle

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040  
651-296-6157 (Metro Area)  
888-MINNDNR (Toll Free)

TDD (Telecommunications Device for Deaf)  
651-296-5484 (Metro Area)  
800-657-3929 (Toll Free)

Department of Natural Resources  
Forestry Area Office  
1604 South Hwy 33  
Cloquet, MN 55720  
218-878-5640

Department of Natural Resources  
Parks and Trails Area Office (for trail information)  
Route 2, 701 South Kenwood Road  
Moose Lake, MN 55767  
218-485-5410

## FOR EMERGENCY SERVICE - DIAL 911

### LAW ENFORCEMENT/ FIRE

Carlton County Sheriff  
218-384-3236

St. Louis County Sheriff  
218-726-2341

### NEAREST HOSPITAL

Community Memorial Hospital  
512 Skyline Blvd.  
Cloquet, MN 55720  
218-879-4641

