

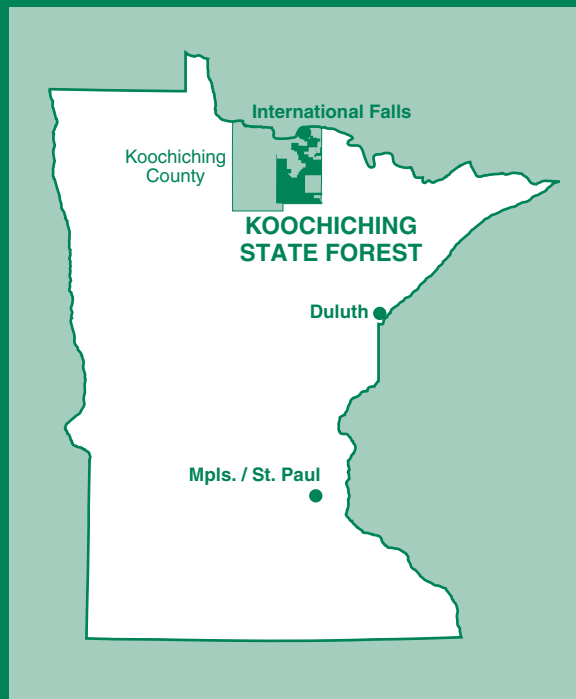
KOOCHICHING STATE FOREST

TRAIL MAP

TILSON CREEK SKI TRAIL, TILSON BAY HIKING TRAIL

Minnesota Department
of Natural Resources

This information is available in
alternative format upon request.



The Koochiching State Forest is located in northern Minnesota in Koochiching County. The Koochiching State Forest encompasses 565,500 acres of which 344,300 acres are state owned, making it one of Minnesota's largest state forests. The forest consists of level terrain with swamp and bog areas left over from glacial Lake Agassiz. The main vegetation types are black spruce, cedar, tamarack, aspen and pine. The Littlefork and Big Fork Canoe and Boating Rivers pass through the forest providing fishing opportunities as well. Wildlife found in the forest include whitetail deer, black bear, ruffed grouse and the timber wolf.

The Tilson Bay Hiking and Tilson Creek Ski Trails are located in Koochiching County about 6.5 miles east of International Falls. The trails can be reached by taking State Highway 11 east from International Falls to Tilson Creek. Signs along the highway show the location of the trail parking lots.

The Tilson Creek East Trail has its trailhead at the Voyageurs National Park, Rainy Lake Visitors Center. This 5.5 kilometer (approximately 3 mile) trail links the Visitor Center to the Tilson Creek Ski Trails.

The Tilson Creek East Trail is a joint project between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, the Koochiching County Land Department and Voyageurs National Park.

The Tilson Bay Hiking and Tilson Creek Ski Trails are located adjacent to Rainy Lake and in a transition area between the rocky canadian shield and the relatively flat area created by glacial Lake Agassiz. The 1.3 mile hiking trail travels along a rock ridge with several overlooks of Rainy Lake. The trail also passes through a wetland and a draw between two ridges.

The 17 kilometer (approximately 10.2 miles) ski trail crosses open and forested bog and passes through stands of aspen, spruce, balsam fir and eastern white cedar. The terrain varies from flat bog, to rolling uplands and steep rock ridges.

Whitetail deer use areas along the trail for winter yarding. Moose, timber wolf and pine martens are occasionally seen along the trail.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Minnesota's 57 state forests and lands outside state forests are managed to produce timber and other forest crops, provide outdoor recreation, protect watersheds and perpetuate rare and distinctive species of native flora and fauna. The Department of Natural Resources applies multiple use management principles to allocate state forest resources to meet the needs of Minnesota's citizens. Management actions are planned and designed to maximize the sustained yield of renewable resources while maintaining and improving the forest's productive capacity.

RECREATION FACILITIES

Outdoor recreation facilities in the Tilson Creek area include a water access to Rainy Lake, 1.3 miles of hiking trail and 10.2 miles of ski touring trail. The Voyageurs National Park Black Bay Visitors center is located about three miles east of the area.

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 on forest roads and forest trails unless they are posted and designated closed.

* Koochiching 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 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 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.

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

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources / Information Center
500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4040

651-296-6157 (Metro Area)
1-888-MINNDNR (MN Toll Free)

TDD (Telecommunications Device for Deaf)
651-296-5484 (Metro Area)
1-800-657-3929 (MN Toll Free)

Littlefork Area Forester (for forest info.)
P.O. Box 65, 421 3rd Ave.
Littlefork, MN 56653
(218) 278-6651

Tower Area Trails and Waterways (for trail info.)
650 Highway 169
Tower, MN 55790
(218) 753-6256

Voyageurs National Park (for park info.)
3131 Highway 53
International Falls, MN 56649
(218) 283-9821

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