






Wealthwood State Forest




FACILITIES

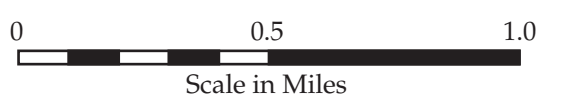
-  Boat Access
-  Carry-in Access

TRAILS

-  Snowmobile Only
-  Wildlife Management Area Road (highway-licensed vehicles only)
-  State Forest Road (all uses)

OWNERSHIP

-  Public Land Within the Forest or Wildlife Management Area
-  Private Land Within the Forest or Wildlife Management Area
-  Land Outside of the Forest or Wildlife Management Area



Wildlife Lands

For more information on Ripple River WMA and other WMAs, contact the DNR at 1-888-MINNDNR

Northern Minnesota
2005

Is It Trespassing?

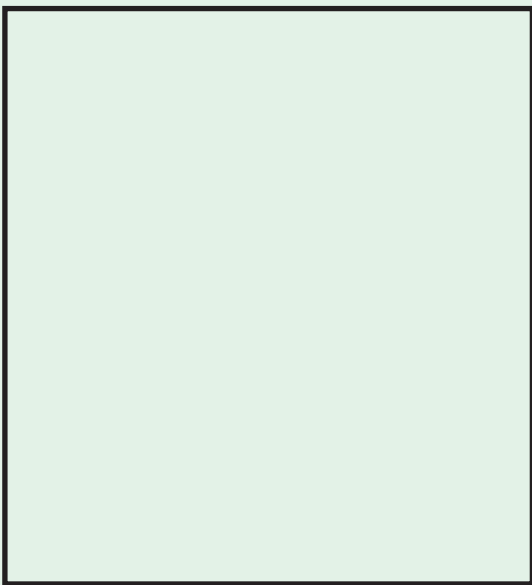
On private land, the simple and best answer is, **Ask First!** Signs are posted by the landowners, and they will state, "No Trespassing," or similar words in two-inch letters and the signature or name and telephone number of the landowner, lessee, or manager. There can be civil and criminal penalties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

Respect Private Property
Ask First

Wealthwood State Forest

A guide to recreational opportunities in Minnesota state forests



About the Forest

Size: 15,042 acres **Year Created:** 1963

Forest Landscape: The southern portion of the forest has a rolling topography that is the result of past glacial activity and contains small wetlands with stands of mixed hardwoods that grow well. Moving to the north, the land levels off. The soil in the forest is fragile, often holding water until mid-summer. There has to be prolonged periods of dry conditions before the soil can support any management or recreation activities. The forest contains Mallard Lake and the Ripple River runs through it. Mille Lacs Lake also borders the forest on the south.

Unique Features: The Ripple River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) covers nearly half of the forest. DNR forest and wildlife managers work closely together so management activities benefit both wildlife and plant species.

Management Activities: Timber harvesting, reforestation, and wildlife habitat improvement occur in the forest. Hardwood stands are managed for high-quality, large-diameter trees of multiple ages for forest products. Harvesting is restricted to winter conditions due to the easily damaged soils prevalent in the forest. An 11-acre deer enclosure was erected in the WMA to protect young red oak and paper birch seedlings planted in the spring of 2006 from deer browsing. The plastic fence that forms the enclosure will be removed in seven years when the planted tree stock has grown above the "browse line." Management activities are directed toward improving tree health to better protect the forest from damage due to insect pests such as the forest tent caterpillar. The DNR manages wild rice and waterfowl in the WMA cooperatively with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. The DNR also protects the forest and surrounding areas from wildfires.

History: Many acres of the land homesteaded in Minnesota's central region were found unsuitable for agriculture and reverted back to state ownership through tax delinquency. Upon examination, however, these lands were found to be valuable for timber production and maintenance of necessary ground cover. As a result, these lands were combined with other state-owned lands to form many of the state forests found in Minnesota today. The Wealthwood State Forest is one of these.

The Minnesota Legislature enlarged the original 1963 forest reserve to its present size of 15,042 acres in the year 2000. The DNR manages 63 percent of the area, with most of the remaining 37 percent being in private ownership. Aitkin County administers less than 1 percent of the lands within the forest boundaries.

Look for ...

Predominant Tree Species:

Northern hardwood stands of red and bur oak, basswood, black ash, sugar and red maple, bitternut hickory, butternut, paper birch, and quaking and bigtooth aspen are common. Scattered white pine can also be found as well as a few plantations of white spruce in the northern part of the WMA. Hackberry grows along the shore of Mille Lacs Lake.

paper birch

Wildlife: White-tailed deer and a variety of songbirds are abundant in the forest and the oak trees with their crops of acorns are attractive to black bears, gray squirrels, and ruffed grouse. Waterfowl such as mallards, ring-necked ducks, and Canada geese are attracted to the lakes, river, and wetland areas in the forest. Otter, beaver, muskrat, and mink can be spotted. A "species of special concern," the red-shouldered hawk, is a feature in the forest and bald eagles and osprey can be seen throughout the area. The WMA also boasts sandhill cranes, woodcock, sharp-tailed grouse, short-eared owls, snowshoe hares, brown creepers, chorus frogs, and four-toed salamanders.

Plants: The unique geology of Mille Lacs Lake influences the vegetation of the area, allowing plants not commonly found this far north to grow in the area. False mermaid and rattlesnake plantain are some of these plants.



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" in regards to all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway vehicles (see OHV information panel, right). However, there are no designated trails for these motorized vehicles in the forest and they can only be used for big-game hunting and trapping. A snowmobile grant-in-aid trail runs east to west through the forest. It is important to note that off-road, motor vehicle use is not allowed anywhere in the WMA.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping, in accordance with state regulations, are allowed on all public land within the state forest, including the WMA. Bird-watching and hiking are popular activities in the forest. The half-mile North Shore Road is the only state forest road and it is open year-round, unless posted closed due to seasonal restrictions.

Mallard Lake contains a public access in the WMA. This lake access is a carry-in type with a wooden dock. Wild rice harvesting, in accordance with state regulations, is allowed on the lake.

SMOKEY SAYS~

Blue Sky Illustration & Design

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.

To learn more about Minnesota's native trees, check out the following:

- "Trees of Minnesota." Minnesota's Bookstore, order number 9-1, phone: 800-657-3757, www.minnesotasbookstore.com
- "Minnesota Trees." Minnesota Extension Service, order number BU-00486-GO, phone: 800-876-8636, www.extension.umn.edu
- "Nature Snapshots: Trees & Shrubs." www.dnr.state.mn.us/trees_shrubs/index.html

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 www.MNtrees.org, 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.

Hunting

Hunting in state forests is allowed during the appropriate season and with the correct license. State forests do contain private holdings within their boundaries, many of which are signed "no hunting." Hunting on private land within a state forest is subject to state trespass laws.

Firearms, deer stands:

Firearms must be unloaded and cased and bows must be unstrung and cased while in or within 200 feet of a forest recreation area (campground, day-use area, etc.). The only exception is during an open hunting season when a person may carry an uncased and unloaded firearm or strung bow to hunt outside of the recreation area.

Temporary and portable deer stands are allowed in state forests.

For more information on hunting and trapping, go to: www.dnr.state.mn.us/hunting

Fishing, Trapping

There are no special provisions or restrictions on fishing or trapping within state forests. Participants in these activities must have the proper license and abide by the same rules and seasons as anywhere else in the state.

For more information on fishing, go to: www.dnr.state.mn.us/fishing

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.



Northeast

Minnesota Snowmobile Trails



Locations of Minnesota's snowmobile trails have been mapped for NW, NE, SW, and SE Minnesota and copies are available from DNR Information Center and other locations. The same information is available on the DNR Web site, www.dnr.state.mn.us.

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.



ATV



OHM



ORV



HLV

For more information on off-highway riding and opportunities, visit:

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

For up-to-date information, check www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/ohv/designation/index.html

WEALTHWOOD 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 damage 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.

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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. May operate an ATV up to 90cc on public lands and frozen waters if accompanied by parent or legal guardian. 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. May operate an ATV on public lands and frozen waters with a valid safety certificate ONLY when accompanied by another ATV by a person 18 or over who has a valid driver's license.
16 and 17	Must successfully complete the ATV independent study course component before operating on public lands. May operate an ATV on public lands and frozen public waters without a safety certificate. Must have a valid driver's license to make a direct crossing of a roadway or operated on road rights-of-way. Must wear approved helmet while operating on public lands, frozen public waters, and on road rights-of-way.



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Photos provided by DNR

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
1200 Minnesota Avenue South
Aitkin, MN 56431-7402
218-927-4040

Department of Natural Resources
Trails and Waterways Area Office (for trail information)
Route 2, 701 South Kenwood Avenue
Moose Lake, MN 55767-9405
218-485-5410

FOR EMERGENCY SERVICE - DIAL 911

LAW ENFORCEMENT/FIRE

Aitkin County Sheriff
218-927-2138

NEAREST HOSPITAL

St. Joseph Hospital
Brainerd, MN 55401
218-829-2861

sandhill crane