

On Track

A Monthly Update on Forest Road & Trail Designation in Minnesota State Forests

Planning Progress

Vol. 1, Issue 5

May 2007

Chippewa Group

- Preparing final plan, maps and Commissioner's Orders for state forest lands
- Environmental Assessment for OHV designations for National forest roads available for public comment through May 14, 2007
- Documents and maps available on Chippewa National Forest website
www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/chippewa/

Cloquet Valley (South St. Louis/Carlton)

- Public review in progress
- Proposed classification: *Managed*.
- Public meetings scheduled for June 20 and June 21
- Comment period ends June 29

Crow Wing/Emily (Crow Wing)

- Public review in progress. Draft plan and map available on DNR website
- Public information meeting in Baxter on June 21, 2007
- Public comment period ends on July 6, 2007

East Central

- Kickoff and orientation for staff May 4
- First public open houses expected later this summer

Koochiching/East Itasca

- Kickoff and orientation for staff May 4
- First public open houses expected in September

Four teams kickoff forest planning in May

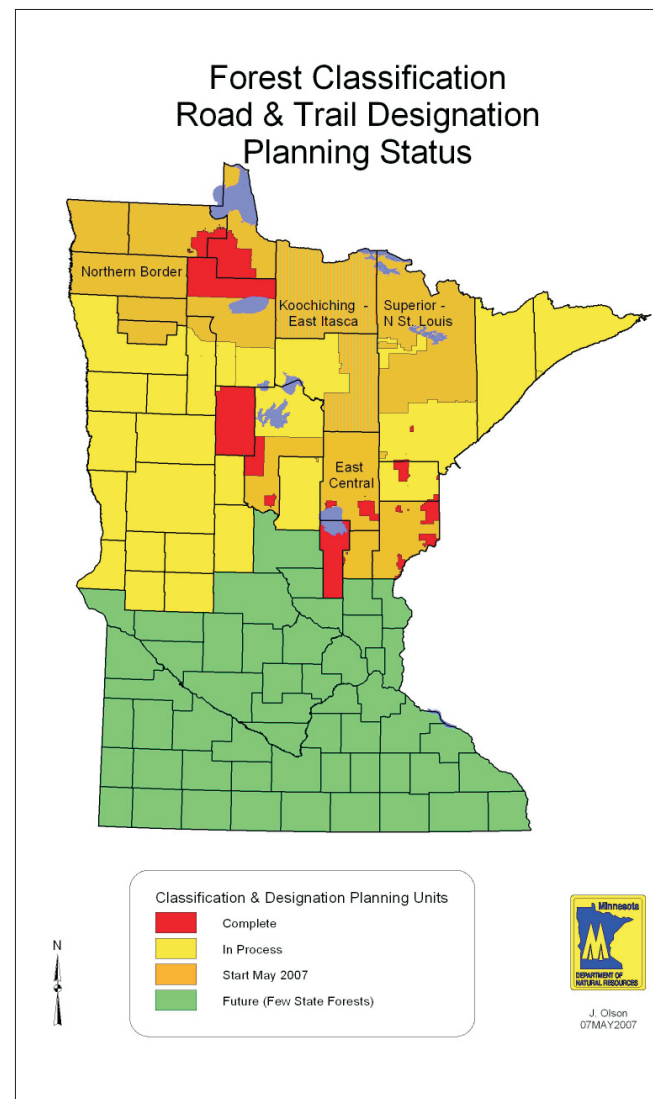
Four teams held a kickoff meeting on forest classification and roads and trails designation planning in Grand Rapids May 4. The meeting gave participants a common understanding of the classification and designation process and expected outcomes.

The meeting began with messages from the OHV Policy Committee, Deputy Commissioner Martinson, division directors, and regional directors on the status and priority of the process, team roles, engaging other land management agencies and the public, and conflict resolution.

Trail designation includes scattered lands – state forestry lands not in a state forest. Teams met to plan next steps. The four teams are:

East Central

- Counties: Aitkin, Kanabec; parts of Cass, Pine
- State forests: DAR, Hill River, Land O' Lakes, Savanna, Snake River, Waukenabo



Koochiching/East Itasca

- Counties: East Itasca, Koochiching
- State forests: George Washington, Golden Anniversary, Koochiching, Pine Island

Northern Border

- Counties: Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, Pennington, Red Lake, Roseau; parts of Beltrami, Clearwater
- State forests: Lake of the Woods, Lost River, Northwest Angle, Red Lake

Superior (St. Louis)

- County: Northern St. Louis
- State forests: Bear Island, Burntside, Kabetogama, Lake Jeannette

West Central Group splits into two planning units

The West Central Group covers 10 counties and includes Lyons, Huntersville, Mississippi Headwaters, Smoky Hills, Two Inlets, and White Earth state forests. Because not every state forest nor county in the planning area is ready for public review, DNR has decided to split the West Central Group into north and south units.

The south unit includes Lyons, Huntersville, Smoky Hills, and Two Inlets state forests and scattered forest lands in Clay, Douglas, Otter Tail, Pope, Todd, and Wadena counties.

The north unit includes Mississippi Headwaters and White Earth state forests and scattered forest lands in Becker, Beltrami, Clearwater, and Mahanomen counties.

The draft plan and recommendations for the south unit will be released on May 14, 2007. DNR expects the draft plan for the north unit to be released later this summer.

Cloquet Valley, Sturgeon River plans out for comment

The Minnesota DNR is seeking public comments on forest classification and motor vehicle route designations for Cloquet Valley and Sturgeon River state forests.

Public meetings for the Cloquet Valley State Forest will be on June 20 in Cotton and on June 21 in Duluth. Public review ends June 29.

For The Sturgeon River State Forest, the public meeting will be on July 10 in Chisholm. Review will end July 20. The review will include an amendment to the Taconite Trail allowing for motorized use on 4.7 miles of the trail.

What's the word?

Seasonal and Temporary Closures

Seasonal or temporary road and trail closures may be imposed at any time due to trail repairs, wet soil conditions, logging operations or other natural resource protection or public safety concerns. Most often, closures happen during spring thaw or following a heavy summer rainfall.

Closures are unpredictable, so always check DNR's list of forest road and trail closures before traveling on state forest lands at this link: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ohv/index.html>

Remember that even if a road or trail is open, no person shall operate a motor vehicle on forest lands in a manner that causes erosion or rutting or injures, damages, or destroys trees or growing crops. The rutting prohibition does not apply on trails that are designated and maintained for motorized use.

For more information, visit the DNR OHV riding web page at
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ohv/index.html>
www.findthetrails.com



Copyrighted 2007 State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources. 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, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age, sexual orientation, membership or activity in a local commission, or disability. Discrimination inquiries should be sent to MN-DNR, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4031; or the Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240. Alternative format available upon request by contacting the DNR Information Center at 1-888-MINNDNR. On Track is published monthly online by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources at www.dnr.state.mn.us.

Planning Progress (cont.)

Northern Border

- Kickoff and orientation for staff May 4
- First public open houses expected later this summer

Sturgeon River (St. Louis)

- Public review in progress
- Next steps: Public meeting July 10 in Chisholm
- Comment period ends July 20

Superior Group (Cook County)

- Public review in progress
- Public meeting May 22
- Public review ends May 31

Superior Group (Lake County)

- Public review in progress
- Public meeting June 12
- Public review ends June 22

Superior Group (North St. Louis County)

- Open houses scheduled for June 6 in Virginia, June 7 in Tower, and June 13 in Orr
- Team will then begin June - August forest classification and route evaluation

West Central Group

- Planning for the north unit is underway; draft plan will be released summer 2007
- South unit public notice, draft plan, and map available for public review May 14
- Proposed classifications: Limited for Huntersville, Lyons, Smoky Hills, and Two Inlets.
- South unit next steps: Public review meeting mid-July 2007