

On Track

A monthly update on forest road and trail designation in Minnesota state forests

Planning Progress

Chippewa Group

- Chippewa National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Maps now available on the Chippewa website: www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/chippewa/

Cloquet Valley (St. Louis)

- Awaiting final approval

East Central

- Inventory maps available on line
- Public open houses complete
- Draft plan/maps public June 2008

Koochiching/Itasca

- Route designation recommendations will be developed by planning team in May and June

Northern Border

- Team developing recommendations for Red Lake State Forest
- Internal review of draft plan in June

Southern Minnesota Unit

- Planning team has developed a draft classification and route designation proposal
- Draft proposal to be presented for regional review in May and CMO review in June

Sturgeon River (St. Louis County)

- Awaiting final approval

Superior Group (North St. Louis County)

- Public meetings planned for July 1, Virginia, MN
July 2, Cook, MN

West Central Group

- WESF draft plan/maps available in May 2008
- Mississippi Headwaters Unit complete
- South Unit complete

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DNR seeks comments on access proposal for forest lands in northern St. Louis County

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will hold two public meetings on its draft forest classification and motor vehicle designation plan for northern St. Louis County.

The draft plan includes suggested forest classification and route designations for state and county forest lands in Bear Island, Burntside, Kabetogama and Lake Jeanette state forests (Sturgeon River and Cloquet Valley state forests are not included), and for scattered DNR forest lands outside of state forest boundaries.

The meetings will be on Tuesday, July 1, Mesabi Range Community & Technical College, Virginia, MN and July 2, Cook School, Cook, MN. Both meetings are scheduled from 6 pm to 8:30 pm.

The proposal is available on the DNR Website at www.mndnr.gov. Copies are also available at the DNR Tower Office.

For more information contact Brian McCann at (651) 259-5627.

Southern Minn. forest access team on schedule

During open houses held March 5 and 6, more than 75 participants provided written comments to the DNR. The Southern Minnesota Unit planning team considered those comments and the 2002 off-highway vehicle system plan for the Dorer State Forest as a starting point for road and trail designations.

The team has completed a preliminary route designation proposal. The draft proposal will undergo internal DNR review and then a public participation process is scheduled to take place in late summer or early fall. Public input will be used to make any revisions necessary before the final forest classification and road and trail designation plan is completed.

DNR approves off-highway vehicle monitoring and enforcement plan

The DNR has approved a monitoring and enforcement plan for the 2008 season that will focus on trail maintenance conditions, off trail travel from designated trails, and impacts of dispersed OHV use.

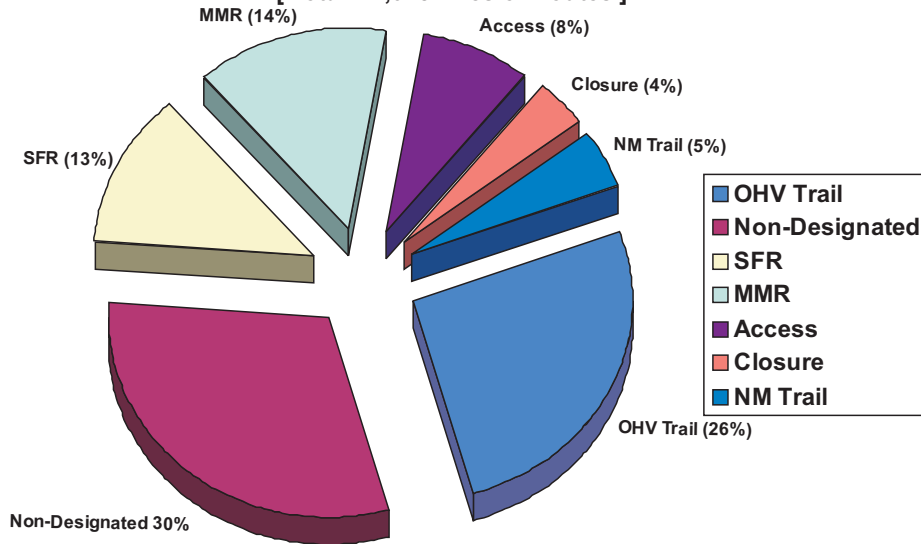
Focus forests for the 2008 season are: Beltrami Island, Finland, General Andrews, Mississippi Headwaters, Paul Bunyan, Fond du Lac, Solana, Rum River, Wealthwood, and Whiteface River.

DNR field staff from Trails and Waterways (T/W), Forestry, and Enforcement will coordinate monitoring and enforcement.

- T/W will have the main responsibility of monitoring and ensuring maintenance of designated trails.
- Forestry staff will monitor dispersed OHV use on forestry lands. They will investigate negative impacts reported by the public, report off trail travel, and will close problematic trails.
- Conservation officers who work close to the focus forest areas will respond to complaints and on-going violations. They will assist in trail monitoring and trail user education.

First 26 State Forests: Final Designations

[Total = 4,618 Miles of Routes]



Source: MN DNR, Trails & Waterways, Unpublished Data, Jan. 2008. Some county-administered routes are included in the route inventory and designation totals. Shared ATV / OHM Trail miles result in substantial double-counting of reported miles of OHV trail designations (above).

Forest Road & Trail Designation Mileage Totals for the First 26 Completed State Forests			
Route Designation		State Forest Land (miles)	
System Forest Road		711	
Min. Maintenance Forest Road		807	
Non-designated Routes*			2409
Proactive Closures		224	
In closed forests		138	
In limited forests		1,591	
In managed forests (forest access routes)		456	
ATV Trail*		678	
OHM Trail*		793	
ORV Trail*		11	
Non-motorized Trails		268	

* Shared use OHV trails result in considerable double-counting of reported OHV trail designation totals. This is particularly true of ATV/OHM trails.

Crow Wing County project completed

The forest classification and road/trail designation process ended with the publication of Commissioner's Orders for state forest lands in Crow Wing County. Final maps and documents are available on the DNR website. DNR staff will be signing roads and trails this summer. The effective date for the new classifications will be December 31, 2008.

East Central planning unit to go public in June

The draft plan and recommendations for the East Central Group are expected to be released in early June 2008. The East Central Group includes six state forests – DAR, Land O'Lakes, Hill River, Savanna, Snake River, Waukenabo – and scattered lands in seven counties – Aitkin, Anoka, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, southern Cass, Washington. Public meetings will be held in mid-August in Pine River, Aitkin, and Mora.

White Earth planning unit to go public in May

Recommendations for the West Central Group's last state forest and final three counties are expected to be released for public review in mid-May. Proposed designations of state forest lands in the White Earth State Forest and scattered lands in Becker, Clearwater, and Mahnommen counties will be highlighted in the draft plan. The public meeting will be in Mahnommen in mid-July.

For more information, visit the DNR OHV riding web page at www.mndnr.gov click on outdoor activities, then OHV riding or www.findthetrails.com



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