

**DRAFT**  
**SAWYER COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**

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**CHAPTER 500**

**LAND MANAGEMENT AND USE**

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## **500 LAND USE**

### **500.1 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Land Use Section are to:

- Identify policies and procedures employed to effectively manage, utilize and sustain the renewable resources of the County Forest.
- Identify regulation management activities, land uses and special resource areas.

## **505 SILVICULTURAL PRACTICES**

Silviculture is the practice of controlling Forest composition, structure, and growth to maintain and/or enhance the Forest's utility for any purpose. These practices are based on research and general silviculture knowledge of the species being managed. The goal is to encourage vigor within all developmental stages of Forest stands. The application of silviculture to a diverse Forest needs a unified, systematic approach. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Public Forest Lands Handbook 2460.5, and the Department of Natural Resources Silvicultural and Forest Aesthetics Handbook 2431.5 will be used as guidelines for sustainable forest management practices on the County Forest.

### **505.1 EVEN-AGED MANAGEMENT**

An even-aged Forest is one composed of trees having relatively small differences in age (typically less than ten (10) years in age). Harvesting practices include clear cutting, shelterwood cutting and seed-tree cutting. The objective of even-age harvests is to regenerate a new Forest stand.

### **505.2 UNEVEN-AGED MANAGEMENT**

An uneven-aged Forest stand is composed of trees that differ markedly in age. The typical cutting practice is selective cutting, where individual trees are removed from the stand. Regeneration is continually occurring after harvest occurs within the stand.

### 505.3 TIMBER SALES

Regulated cutting of timber is essential to the goals and objectives of this Plan. Timber harvesting will be conducted on an annual basis in an effort to achieve a sustainable harvest level on the Forest. Harvest areas will be distributed in the Forest to accommodate such needs as biodiversity, wildlife, aesthetics, watershed protection, recreation and other biological and/or social needs. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forest Reconnaissance printout will be used as the basis for planning and scheduling harvests. All Timber Sales will be established, administered and reported in accordance with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Timber Sale Handbook 2461. All Timber Sales on the Forest are to be advertised for public bidding, with the exception of:

- Miscellaneous, salvage, or emergency type Timber Sales allowed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Timber Sale Handbook and further defined in this Plan. These may be sold direct without advertising.
- All Timber Sales remaining unsold after being advertised for two (2) successive bid openings may be sold direct at not less than the appraised value (see Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Timber Sale Handbook 2461).

#### 505.3.1 Direct Timber Sales

All Timber Sales on the Forest must be advertised for public bidding (as described in Section 505.3) unless they meet the requirements for direct sales. Timber Sales meeting any of the following criteria may be sold directly, without advertising:

- Small Timber Sales with an estimated value of three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) or less.
- Timber Sales that would qualify under a salvage (fire, wind, insects, disease, hail, snow, or ice) provision of s. 28.11(6)(c), Wis. Stats.

505.3.1.1 County and State Responsibilities for Field Preparation of Timber Sales

The County and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will cooperate to locate, designate and prepare harvest areas for Timber Sales. The Forest Administrator and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Liaison Forester shall jointly be responsible to see that the fieldwork on Timber Sales is accomplished. Best Management Practices for Water Quality will be incorporated where applicable.

Form 2460 is the approval process for Timber Sales on the County Forest. The Forester responsible for each Timber Sale shall complete Form 2460 for each tract. Each tract should be reviewed by no less than the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Liaison Forester, Forest Administrator and Assistant Forest Administrator before the Timber Sale is approved for advertising. The following information is required on the Timber Sale map narrative:

- Tract number
- Tract map
- Legal description
- Wood to be harvested and estimated volume
- Special contract provisions and cutting prescriptions
- Management considerations
- Any other pertinent environmental issues

505.3.2 Advertising for Bids

After fieldwork is completed and necessary reports prepared for Department of Natural Resources (DNR) approval, the Forest Administrator shall prepare a Timber Sale prospectus and make it available to interested loggers. Timber Sale advertisements, at a

minimum, will be by Classified ad in a newspaper having general circulation in the County (s. 28.11(6)(b), Wis. Stats.). Ads shall be run once prior to bid opening.

Sealed bid Timber Sales will generally be offered three (3) times per year - April, August and December. Special bid openings may be offered by the Sawyer County Forestry Committee.

#### 505.3.3 Prospectus

The following information will be made available to prospective bidders:

- Species to be harvested and estimated volume by product
- Minimum acceptable bid on the total sale
- Maps of Timber Sale areas and cutting prescriptions
- Special contract provisions
- Procedures for bidding
- Bid forms to include system for whole tree utilization
- Timber Sale Bid Bond and Advance Stumpage Payment Schedule
- Policy for extensions and amendments
- Timber harvesting procedures along Birkie Trail and other Recreational Trails

#### 505.3.4 Method of Bidding and Bid Opening

A sealed envelope showing tract number and marked "sealed bid" shall be submitted on County Forest bid forms by the bidder for each tract bid on, and shall contain:

- The bid price per cord or per thousand board (1,000) board feet for each species offered and the total for each species bid. The total value of the timber sale bid shall be indicated on both scaled and lump sum bids. The total bid value must meet or exceed the advertised sale minimum

- A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the bid value of each tract must accompany the bid as a Bid Bond, payable to the Sawyer County Treasurer. This Bond may be in the form of a Check, Surety Bond, Letter of Credit or Cash.
- Bids will be opened by the Forest Administrator and two (2) other witnesses in advance of the Forestry Committee. A Bid Summary will be submitted to the Forestry Committee for review and approval.

#### 505.3.5 Awarding Sales

The procedure for awarding Timber Sales is as follows:

- Bid Summaries will be reviewed at a meeting of the Forestry Committee.
- The high bidder is normally awarded the Timber Sale contract; however, the Forestry Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and accept the bid offer most advantageous to the County. Grounds for rejecting bids may include, but are not limited to:
  - Non-compliance with County Forest contract requirements
  - Delinquent financial obligations
  - Unsatisfactory past performance - per recommendation of the Forest Administrator
  - Inability to demonstrate financial or professional capability.

Evaluation criteria on timber sales will be price and documented ability to satisfactorily complete the contract. Factors to be assessed may include proposed equipment and operation, references, proof of financial stability, past performance and documented training completed. Sawyer County will require training of logging contractors. The award of contract to the successful bidder shall be based upon the bid determined most advantageous to the County.

- Tie bids on total volume of sale may be settled by the toss of a coin if both parties are agreeable; otherwise, the bids on that tract will be rejected and the sale re-advertised.
- Timber Sales remaining unsold after being advertised for two (2) successive bid openings may be sold direct at not less than the appraised value even through their estimated value exceeds three thousand dollars (\$3,000) - see Department of Natural Resources Timber Sale Handbook 2461, Chapter 52.

#### 505.3.6 Sales Contracts

- Contracts will be prepared with copies provided to the logger and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), with the original filed in the Forest Administrator's office.
- Contracts are to be signed by the successful bidder within thirty (30) days of the sale or before cutting begins, whichever occurs first, with payment being made according to the County Timber Sale Bond and Advance Stumpage Payment Schedule. Failure to sign the contract within thirty (30) days could cause forfeiture of the Performance Bond.
- The Forest Administrator will review the contract in full with the logger before cutting is started (Pre-Sale meeting). An onsite meeting shall be held between the County representative and the contractor prior to operation on the Timber Sale. A Pre-Sale Inspection Form shall be signed by the Forest Administrator and logger/contractor.

#### 505.3.7 Timber Sale Performance Bond

- An Irrevocable Letter of Credit or Surety Bond issued by a bank which is a member of the Federal Reserve System or insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation may be used in lieu of cash as a Performance Bond on sales. The Letter of Credit or

Surety Bond must be in effect for a period time equal to the term of the contract, plus a sufficient time to allow for possible extension(s) and for closeout of the contract after cutting is completed.

- The Bid Bond may be transferred to the Performance Bond.
- Timber Sale closeout: At the completion of all Timber Sales, an inspection of the Timber Sale will be conducted to check for compliance to the contract and to insure all obligations of contractor have been met before releasing the Performance Bond.

#### 505.3.8 Contract Provisions

All Timber Sale Contracts will be on the form approved by the Forestry Committee and all provisions therein shall apply. A copy of the Timber Sale map will be attached and become a part of the contract.

##### 505.3.8(a) Slash Disposal, Landings and Decking

The objective is to control conditions that affect the following: fire, insects, disease, aesthetics, regeneration, wetlands, wildlife and public interest. Each Timber Sale Contract will have specific slash disposal instructions and aesthetic safeguards and will include without limit the following:

- All slash must be reduced to a maximum specified height as specified by aesthetic zone management: no trees, tops or limbs shall be leaning or hanging in standing timber.
- No machinery may be operated in lakes or streams with the exception of County approved permitted crossings.
- No slash may be deposited in lakes or streams pursuant to s. 26.12(6), Wis. Stats.
- No slash, logging debris or machinery operation outside the sale boundary unless approved by the County representative.

- Landings and decks are not allowed within one hundred (100) feet from the centerline of any public road except by proper authorization from the County representative and the local authority.
- Any debris or material not natural to the land shall be properly disposed of as it is generated.
- All slash disposal, road or landing areas, and other woods operations shall be conducted in compliance with State regulations, local shoreland and wetland zoning restrictions, and Wisconsin's Best Management Practices for Water Quality.
- Any logging generated debris (oil, cables, cans, tires, etc.) shall not be disposed of on-site but shall be disposed of properly.
- Spills of petroleum or other hazardous fluids must be reported according to State law to the proper authorities.

505.3.8(b) Duration and Extension of Contracts

- All contracts will normally be issued annually, unless otherwise stated in the advertisement and/or in the contract. Contracts will be dated to expire on the first of the month of the sale. Exceptions may be made in cases of extenuating circumstances.
- At the discretion of the Forestry Committee, a one (1) year extension, if deemed necessary by the seller, may be granted at the same stumpage rate as the original contract. A second extension will have a ten percent (10%) increase in stumpage rates. A third extension will have a fifteen percent (15%) increase in stumpage rates. Any further extensions will have an additional ten percent (10%) added to the previous extension rates and other extensions will

have a ten percent (10%) increase in stumpage value.

- The maximum time duration of a Timber Sale Contract, including extensions shall normally be four (4) years.
- Extensions beyond this period of time shall be considered by the Forestry Committee only in the event of special justification. Special stumpage rate adjustments may be made.
- If purchasers do not wish to have contracts renewed or extended, the County reserves the right to charge double stumpage for any timber left in the sale area. The Performance Bond will be forfeited for non-completion and the sale may be re-advertised.
- The contractor may request a contract release due to severe physical or financial disability. The Forestry Committee shall determine whether or not a release shall be granted and may withhold all or a portion of the bond deposit for damages.

#### 505.3.8(c) Contract Violations

Contract violation issues are the responsibility of the Forestry Committee. Field enforcement of Timber Sale Contracts will be the responsibility of the Forest Administrator, or designee employing the following procedure:

- The Forest Administrator, or designee, will attempt to resolve violations by verbal and written contact with the contractor. All violations shall have written documentation that will be placed in the Timber Sale folder.

Any instances of wood being removed from the sale without being scaled or a haul ticket deposited in the ticket box shall be reported to the Forestry Committee and be considered a contract violation.

- The Forest Administrator, or designee, may immediately suspend logging operations when necessary.
- The suspension will be followed by written notice to the contractor stating the nature of the violation and informing them of Forestry Committee action taken or pending. The contractor may request an opportunity for a hearing during the next Forestry Committee meeting.
- The Forestry Committee, in consultation with legal counsel, may consider, but is not limited to the following remedies:
  - Terminate contract
  - Charge double stumpage
  - Charge for actual damage
  - Assess damages
  - Suspend contract
  - Retain all deposits
  - Foreclose on cut products on sale
  - Refer to legal counsel for disposition
  - Refer to District Attorney for prosecution
  - Seek civil damages beyond deposits
- Suspension of operations will remain in effect until receipt of written notice from the Forestry Committee or Forest Administrator.
- At the Forestry Committee's direction, failure to comply with Timber Sale Contracts or Forestry Committee decisions may result in the contractor becoming a non-qualifying and ineligible bidder in the future.
- At the Forestry Committee's direction, the contractor may be denied further purchase of County Timber Sales for a period of time of not more than four (4) years.
- All deposits may be retained and Forest products on sale areas may be seized and sold by the County.

### Theft

Removal of wood from the sale area without being scaled by County Forest personnel or without correct use of the County lock box system is deemed as harvested without the owners consent or permission and subjects the Purchaser to civil and/or criminal penalties as provided for under sections 26.03, 26.06, and 943.20 of the Wis. Stats. Such unauthorized removal of Forest products shall cause cancellation of the contract and forfeiture of the Performance Bond or deposit and all monies paid to the County.

#### 505.3.9 Timber Sale Restrictions

Timber sale restrictions may be implemented for the follow reasons:

- To minimize resource damage, the types of logging equipment, methods, and times of operation used on sale areas will be restricted by the County.
- Special restrictions may be required in accordance with the Aesthetic Policy set forth in Section 520.
- Seasonal restrictions may be applied to protect roads, minimize recreation use conflicts, benefit wildlife management, avoid endangered resources concerns, minimize insect and disease problems, or to assist in fire protection.

#### 505.3.10 Special Forest Product Contracts

Stumpage for fuelwood, Christmas trees, boughs, posts and poles and other special Forest products for re-sale will be handled as a regular timber sale.

##### 505.3.10(a) Policy for Town Road Right-of-Way Timber Management

The Sawyer County Forestry Committee and Forestry Department recognizes the importance of maintaining public roadways and road

Right-Of-Ways. The policy of the Sawyer County Forestry Committee shall be to create and maintain a cooperative relationship with townships regarding the harvest/clearing of County owned timber from easement Right-Of-Ways adjacent to Sawyer County owned lands.

**Sawyer County's preference will be to harvest timber in these Right-Of-Ways through the Forestry Department's normal timber sale establishment process.** The Forestry Department will contact Townships on an annual basis to request a simple plan of their Right-Of-Way clearing needs and then sell and remove merchantable timber in an appropriate time frame depending on road construction schedules.

In most all cases, the Sawyer County Forest owns the timber growing in the Right-Of-Way adjacent to County Forest land. All timber cut on the County Forest land belongs to the County. Any removal of wood products from these areas without the County's permission is considered theft. The involved Township or responsible party(ies) may be subject to damages pursuant to State Statute 26.09. (At a minimum, penalties for timber theft include double stumpage charges).

**Background: Right-Of-Ways and Timber Ownership**

Most Townships do not own the Right-of-Ways adjacent to Town roads. Landowners adjacent to public roadways **own** the timber growing on the Right-Of-Way unless the Right-Of-Way was **purchased** by the unit of government that built or maintains the roadway. **Township road Right-Of-Ways** are rarely purchased, and in **most cases are easements**. The easement normally gives the townships the right to clear the road Right-Of-Ways within thirty-three (33) feet from the centerline of the road without additional

notice to the landowner, **but the townships have no legal ownership to the timber that is cut on easement Right-Of-Ways**. Removal of timber from an easement Right-Of-Way without the permission of the landowner is timber theft and subjects violating parties to penalties as described in State Statutes.

#### 505.3.11 Timber Sale Roads

- The contractor will be responsible for securing legal access to sale areas across private and/or other non-County ownership.
- The contractor will be responsible for securing permission to conduct logging activities within Town, County or State road right-of-ways (e.g. decking, skidding, etc.).
- Forestry personnel will approve the proposed layout and location of all roads and make other necessary special provisions within the sale contract.
- Skidding, decking, or other logging activity is not allowed on County Forest roads or ditches unless approved by the County Forest Administrator. These areas will be kept free from logging debris. County Forest access roads will be maintained by the logger and be left in good as original condition at the close of the sale. Roads will be inspected by County personnel to insure minimal resource damage.
- A timber sale purchaser may request permission to gate a timber sale access road while cutting the sale. The Forest Administrator may grant a gate permit to prohibit only motorized traffic.
- The Timber Sale Map will indicate if the access road is to be bermed by the logger upon completion of the sale.

#### 505.3.12 Administering and Supervising Sales

Supervision of sales will be the responsibility of the Forest Administrator. However, routine sale inspections may also be performed by Department of Natural Resources (DNR) personnel, and other County Forest

employees. All sales shall be inspected during the course of operations and when operations are complete before closing the contract.

Observations of possible contract non-compliance will be reported to the Forest Administrator who will take appropriate action and make notation in the Timber Sale record. The Timber Sale will not be closed or the Performance monies released until a final field check has been performed by the Forest Administrator and notification has been given to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that the timber sale is completed and contract compliance has been determined to be satisfactory. The bond will be released thirty (30) days after the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has been notified unless a problem surfaces.

- A weekly Timber Sale Activity Status Report will be created by the Forestry Department and distributed to members of the Forestry Committee and Forestry Staff.
- A monthly report Loggers Report and summary of products harvested and monthly income will be created by the Forestry Department and distributed to members of the Forestry Committee and Forestry Staff.

#### 505.3.13 Forest Products Accountability

The Forest Administrator shall be responsible for accounting for Forest products cut from timber sales and for collecting payment due. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forester is responsible to the State for verifying all scale on cutting reports.

##### 505.3.13(a) Scaling Merchantability

- Sawlogs will be scaled by the Scribner Decimal C log rule. A log is defined as ten inch (10") diameter small end inside bark (d.i.b.) at eight (8) feet in length for softwood and hardwood. Merchantability will be considered as fifty percent

(50%) sound wood and reasonably straight.

- The standard unit of measure for cordwood is measuring four feet by four feet by one hundred inches (4'x4'x100") for unpeeled wood. Peeled wood will be converted to the standard cord by adding twelve and one-half percent (12.5%) for sap-peeled and twenty-five percent (25%) for machine-peeled wood to the gross volume measured. A pulpwood tree contains at least one (1) 100" stick, to a minimum top diameter or as defined in the contract.
- Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Timber Sale Handbook 2461 will be used as a guide in determining the conversion rates for posts, poles, bolts, chips, weight-scaled wood or other types of Forest products.

#### 505.3.13(b) Utilization Standards

Utilization standards will be specified on individual contracts to provide maximum utilization of all merchantable timber and will be based on the scaling standards in 505.3.13(a).

#### 505.3.13(c) Methods of Accountability

Wood harvested from the sale area must be accounted for and payment made in accordance with existing policy and procedure. One or more of the following may be used on an individual sale:

- The ticket system utilizes serialized three-part tickets. A ticket shall be deposited in the ticket box for all Forest products hauled from the sale. Wood that has been pre-scaled prior to hauling shall have a ticket filled out and noted as scaled before depositing in the ticket box.
  - The first ticket is to be deposited in the ticket box assigned to the sale.
  - The middle ticket must accompany each load of wood to the mill and be turned in to the scaler at the mill.

- The third ticket is for the contractor and is optional.
- Mill scale will be accepted for pulpwood volume determination. The Sale Administrator may also scale pulpwood on the landing as needed or when determined practical. All pulpwood will be marked with paint on landing to indicate that the wood has been scaled and volume determined. All sawtimber will be scaled and painted by County personnel or designated representative before being hauled from sale area.
- Lump sum sales may be utilized and divided into cutting units when practical. Payment for a cutting unit must be received in full before any cutting begins in that unit.

#### 505.3.14 Special Forest Product Permits

- A written permit for making fuelwood for personal use must be purchased for a specific area designated on the permit.
- A written permit for cutting boughs for personal use will be issued for a specific area designated on the permit. Bough payment rate will be set by the Forestry Committee.
- Written permits may be issued for special Forest products for community or personal use, with fees established by the Forestry Committee.
- An annual summary report of cut products sold by permit will be filed with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) using the Timber Sale Notice and Cutting Report Form 2460-1.

### 505.4 FOREST REGENERATION: NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL

Sawyer County will utilize natural and artificial regeneration techniques as part of its' program to ensure the sustainability of its' Timber Management Program.

#### 505.4.1 Natural Regeneration

Natural Regeneration refers to reforestation of harvested or non-forested

areas that occurs by natural means such as by tree seed dispersal by nearby trees or seedlings that grow naturally from the stumps or the root system of harvested or windblown trees.

#### 505.4.2 Artificial Regeneration

Artificial regeneration refers to reforestation of harvested or non-forested areas that occurs by man's methods such as tree planting or direct seeding with seed collected from other sites. Artificial regeneration normally involves some type of site preparation and frequently requires follow-up practices to ensure the survival of desirable seedlings.

#### 505.4.3 Costs/Benefits of Natural versus Artificial Regeneration

Natural regeneration is nearly always less expensive and less time consuming than artificial regeneration.

Artificial regeneration is more expensive and time consuming because it often involves labor or equipment intensive activities to prepare sites, plant or seed sites, and release desirable seedlings from competing vegetation. The two (2) most common reasons why artificial regeneration is utilized despite its' higher costs are: 1) some sites are slow to, will not, or unreliably regenerate following harvest, wind storm, Forest fire, or abandonment of agricultural fields; and, 2) it is possible to control or influence the future composition of the trees on a site for a number of reasons including higher growth rate and productivity of certain species, aesthetic or recreational purposes, or a higher economic rate of return. Natural regeneration will be encouraged where feasible, through the use of silvicultural methods or cultural activities including, but not limited to, clearcuts, shelterwood cuts, strip cuts, scarification, prescribed burning, select cuts and seed tree cuts. These practices can be enhanced by additional treatments, including the cutting of non-merchantable trees following harvest, by scarification before or after cutting for natural

seeding, by prescribed burning, and by chemical treatment. These treatments can be used alone or in combination, depending on the needs of the site.

When natural tree regeneration fails, or when tree species present do not coincide with management objectives for the site, then artificial means shall be employed to establish a more appropriate stand of trees. The establishment of a Forest stand through artificial means usually requires some sort of site preparation, followed by seeding or planting, and a later release from competing vegetation. The Silvicultural and Aesthetics Handbook (DNR Handbook 2431.5) shall be used as a reference in determining timing, techniques and adequacy of both natural and artificial regeneration.

#### 505.4.4 Tools for Achieving Forest Regeneration

##### 505.4.4.1 Removal of Non-Merchantable Residual Trees

The cutting of non-merchantable residual trees may be required as part of a Timber Sale contract in order to ensure the survival of future seedlings, remove an undesirable seed source, clean the site for planting, etc. This requirement will normally be included in the Timber Sale contract when stand evaluation indicates that the density of non-merchantable trees following harvest is likely to inhibit the growth of desirable shade tolerant tree species. Removal of non-merchantable residual trees may also be done post-sale by County crews if it cannot be done as part of the Timber Sale contract, and if funding and a labor source is available.

##### 505.4.4.2 Prescribed Burning for Natural Regeneration

Fire is one of the most natural means available to stimulate the reforestation of early successional tree species, to prepare a site for planting, or to regenerate species such as

Oak or Jack Pine that generally regenerate or compete more favorably following a fire. It is a tool employed by Foresters both for natural or artificial regeneration purposes.

Prescribed burning for site preparation can be used to reduce logging debris, clear the site, kill or set back unwanted competing vegetation, and to release nutrients into the soil. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fire Control staff will be the major source of guidance and direction for the use of fire as a tool. See Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fire Presuppression Handbook 4320.50.

#### 505.4.4.3 Mechanical Site Preparation

Mechanical site preparation is considered an artificial regeneration tool and includes the use of soil disturbance equipment such as a disc, roller chopper, patch scarifier, disk trencher or V-plow. The purpose is to prepare the ground on a site prior to tree planting or seeding. This type of equipment is used to reduce logging debris to a smaller size, to incorporate debris into the soil, to clear brush and debris from the site to facilitate planting or seeding, and to reduce competition from other vegetation.

#### 505.4.4.4 Chemical Site Preparation

Herbicide application is also considered an artificial regeneration tool and can be an effective means of controlling unwanted vegetation in order to prepare a site for seeding or planting or to release desirable seedlings from competing vegetation. It may be used sparingly in situations where mechanical treatment is not expected to provide the

level of vegetative control needed. Chemicals will be selected and applied in strict accordance with label recommendations and requirements. The objective of herbicide use is to set back competing vegetation enough to establish a reasonably stocked stand of desirable trees. Proximity to private lands, residences, highways and other public use areas will be considered in selecting both the herbicide and the means of application. Herbicides can be applied with hand-held equipment, by motorized ground based equipment or aircraft. A written prescription for each herbicide application will be prepared, kept on file, and be made available to the primary applicator.

#### 505.4.4.5 Other Site Preparation Methods

Site preparation by other means may be considered where natural or artificial regeneration will be aided by treatment methods.

#### 505.4.4.6 Tree Planting/Seeding

Either machine and/or hand planting/seeding will be utilized to insure adequate regeneration. The selection of species to plant or seed will be determined according to the specific management objectives and capabilities of each site. The majority of planting/seeding will be done in harvested areas where natural regeneration is inadequate.

### 505.5 TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENT

Timber stand improvement practices to be utilized may include release, thinning, and pruning during this Plan period. Timber stand improvement includes any practices that increase the health, growth and quality of existing stands of trees.

It can include activities such as release of desirable trees from vegetative competition, non-commercial thinnings of dense tree stands and pruning of lower tree branches. Some practices can be done either by hand, mechanically, or chemically. All practices and applications may be employed during this Plan period.

#### 505.5.1 Release

Release work, if it cannot be done by commercial timber harvest, will be conducted by either mechanical or chemical means as site or environmental conditions warrant. Release is defined as the removal of competing vegetation from the desirable tree species.

#### 505.5.2 Non-Commercial Thinning

Most thinning can be accomplished through commercial harvest operations. Non-commercial thinning will be considered if the individual site requirements, funding and/or available labor make it desirable.

#### 505.5.3 Pruning

Pruning will be considered mainly for conifer species and carried out when deemed economically feasible.

## **510 RECREATION**

The County Forest Ordinance and s. 28.11, Wis. Stats. authorize the Forestry Committee to provide recreational opportunities for the public. This authority is further recognized in the Mission Statement for the Sawyer County Forest (Chapter 100) which specifically identifies outdoor recreation opportunities. The Mission Statement also charges the Forestry Committee to conduct activities in a manner that prevents or minimizes the degradation of natural resources.

- The Forestry Committee may establish and maintain recreation areas and facilities within the County Forest. The Forestry Committee has been empowered to establish and enforce rules and regulations for the use of such developments and to establish fees for their use.

- The County Outdoor Recreation Plan, prepared by the Land and Water Conservation Department and updated approximately every five (5) years, will reflect the public use and interest in the County's recreation facilities and how the County plans to accommodate those uses and interests.
- The Sawyer County ordinances shall govern the lands designated by the County for park or recreational purposes.
- The County Recreation maps and the ordinances are appended in Chapter 900.

#### 510.1 RECREATIONAL AND TRAIL STEWARD SERVICE AGREEMENTS

It is permissible for the Forestry Committee to contract with clubs or individuals to provide recreational services for the public. An agreement with a local snowmobile alliance to assist in grooming and maintaining county snowmobile and ATV trails facilities is an example. Written agreements with recreational clubs or organizations are required for any group building or maintaining recreational trails or facilities on the Sawyer County Forest. Agreements must be in place before the ground activity occurs. The purpose of these agreements are to define:

- Working relationships and responsibilities
- Financial relationship
- Expectations for training of personnel or volunteers who perform earth moving/disturbance activities on the County Forest
- Organized trail events and group-sponsored activities must protect Sawyer County with a minimum of one million dollar (\$1,000,000) liability insurance coverage and provide a Certificate of Insurance as proof of coverage that show Sawyer County as additionally insured.
- See Chapter 740.6 for more details about Recreational Trail Stewards Application

Agreements with the following cooperating organizations can be found in Chapter 900:

- Sawyer County Snowmobile/ATV Alliance
- American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation
- Archery Club
- Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association (CAMBA)
- Seeley Ski Club
- Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival

## 510.2 RECREATIONAL USE PERMITS

Organized events or special uses, other than informal recreation, require specific approval and/or a permit from the Forestry Committee. The sale of malt or intoxicating beverages is not permitted on the County Forest. Other types of special use permits or agreements are found in Section 515.

### 510.2.1 Recreational Cabin Permits

The Sawyer County Forest currently has a recreational cabin permit system in place. Legal opinions from the State of Wisconsin Assistant Attorney General and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) indicate that the recreational cabin permit system is not in compliance with s. 28.11, Wis. Stats.

**Phase-out Plan:** In January 2005, the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors voted to phase-out the recreational cabin permit system so that all cabins will be removed from the County Forest no later than December 31, 2010. No new cabin permits will be issued. Remaining permits will be administered in accordance with the following provisions and in compliance with Sawyer County Ordinances. Non-compliance with conditions of the recreational cabin permit as hereby set forth will normally require cancellations.

#### 510.2.2 Administration

- Current permits may be renewed annually. Permits will expire on December 31 of each year and shall be subject to renewal at the discretion of the Forestry Committee.
- Permittee must remove (move or demolish) said structure by December 31, 2010. Removal or demolition must be in compliance with any and all County, State and Federal laws. The site must be restored with grass or clover upon removal.
- Payment will be due by May 1st of each year each year. A ten dollar (\$10.00) late fee will be added to the permit fee after May 1st. **If not paid by October 31st, permit can be cancelled.**
- Rate of payment: One Thousand (\$1,000) per year. One-half of this fee, beginning in 2005, will be held by Sawyer County as a performance deposit (**Camp Disposal Fund Fee**) to insure the building is removed by Permittee in compliance with State and County rules and regulations within six (6) months after expiration date of the permit. At that time, any balance of the deposit will be returned to the Permittee after the cabin is correctly removed.
- Each cabin will be inspected annually for compliance with conditions of the permit and this plan. If, in the opinion of the Forest Administrator or the Forestry Committee, maintenance or upkeep are required or there are other violations of the agreement or of this plan, the Permittee will be notified in writing of the measures needed to be taken to correct the violation(s). The Forest Administrator will establish a reasonable time limit within which the Permittee must comply. The Forest Administrator will re-inspect such sites at the end of the given time period. If required remedies have not been satisfied, the permit will normally be cancelled.
- Relocation of existing permitted structures to another location on the County Forest will not be permitted under any circumstances.

In the case of an unexpected loss, the Permittee will not be allowed to rebuild on the existing site. Any structure must still be removed by the sunset date of December 31, 2010.

#### 510.2.3 Other

- Each cabin will have posted, visible from the outside, the recreational cabin permit Control Number.
- Installation of electric power will not be allowed.
- Cabins may not be removed or demolished without first contacting the Forest Administrator.
- Issuance of a recreational cabin permit provides only for the Permittee to place a cabin upon a piece of described land. Posting or placing of "No Trespassing" signs on cabin area or other County Forest lands will require cancellation of permit.
- Using the cabin any part of the year for home residence is not allowed. Renting a cabin to another individual for a fee is not allowed.
- Cabins cannot be sold and permits transferred without prior approval from the Forest Administrator.

### 510.3 EXTENSIVE RECREATIONAL USE OF THE FOREST

Extensive recreation is defined as informal use. Examples of extensive uses shall include, but are not necessarily limited to: hunting, fishing, picnicking, biking, showshoeing, hiking, cross-country skiing off non-designated trails, photography, and nature study. Such uses do not require a permit but must be conducted according to the provisions of County Ordinances.

#### 510.3.1 Hunting

The entire County Forest is open for regulated hunting with exception of areas that the Forestry Committee may designate as closed due to development for high public use.

**Temporary hunting stands are permissible but must not be erected before September 1 and must be removed from the County Forest no later than December 31 each year. This includes elevated stands and ground blinds. The use of nails, lag screws, screw steps, or other damaging devices in trees is not permissible. No permanent type structures shall be permitted.**

510.3.2 Fishing

All lakes and streams within the County Forest are available for regulated fishing, unless otherwise listed in State and County regulations.

510.3.3 Picnicking

Picnicking is allowed throughout the County Forest; however, the user must remove any garbage or debris generated. Violators will be subject to fines for littering.

510.3.4 Camping

No camping is currently allowed on the Sawyer County Forest.

510.4 INTENSIVE RECREATION AREAS

The Sawyer County Forest has sites developed to accommodate a high degree of public use. The Forestry Committee may prohibit other recreation activities that are not compatible with the intent of the development facilities.

510.4.1 Campgrounds

Sawyer County currently has no campgrounds.

510.4.2 Developed Picnic Areas

A developed picnic area open to the public is located at:

- Hatchery Creek Park

#### 510.4.3 Swimming Areas

Sawyer County currently has no designated swimming areas.

#### 510.4.4 Boat Landings

The Sawyer County Forest has boat landings at the following locations:

- Nelson Lake Tag Alder Landing (Highly Developed)
- Weirgor Lake (100 foot walk-in landing)

These landings are not to be considered boat-mooring sites. These landings are provided for public access to waters for recreational purposes and are shown on the recreation map in Chapter 900. Water access is also addressed in Chapter 700.

#### 510.4.5 Shooting Ranges

Currently, there are no shooting ranges for firearms on the Sawyer County Forest. It is not uncommon for the public to use borrow pits located on the County Forest for sighting rifles. There is an archery range located near the Hayward Fire Tower north of County Highway B. It is within the powers of the Forestry Committee to allow ranges to be developed on the County Forest, but they must be open for public use. **If the range is operated by an organization other than the County, then a written land use agreement will be required. The agreement shall include a provision ensuring public use, and require submission of proof of insurance annually.**

#### 510.5 MANAGED TRAIL AREAS

The Sawyer County Forest is a multiple-use Forest. The vast majority of the recreational trails that exist on the County Forest were originally built by the County, State or logging contractors to access the Forest for reforestation purposes, fire protection, and for a road system to truck harvested timber. Today, many of the roads originally built for Forestry purposes are utilized and enjoyed by many types of recreational users as well.

All recreational trails must be approved by the Forestry Committee before being built, or before they are designated for use if they already exist. The County Forest Administrator will present maps and other pertinent information regarding new proposed trails to the Forestry Committee for their decision.

Motorized and non-motorized activities are both recognized as legitimate uses within the Forest when the trail systems are:

- well-planned and designed to avoid user conflicts and minimize hazards, and,
- well-engineered and maintained for sustainability and to prevent erosion and to protect wetlands and water quality

Whenever possible and practical, multiple uses of trail systems are encouraged. Because Sawyer County is a working Forest with an active Timber Management Program, recreational users may frequently encounter Forest management activities. While harvesting activities may be unpopular with some recreational Forest users, logging is economically significant to the County directly (timber income) and indirectly (primary and secondary employment). In general, the Recreational Trails Program and the Timber Management Program can co-exist with minimal conflicts if they are well planned and coordinated. The trail systems are identified in Chapter 900.

#### 510.5.1 Motorized Trail Opportunities

Motorized travel on trails can be a legitimate use of the County Forest provided that these trails are designed and maintained in a manner that minimizes damage to the environment and reduces user conflict. Trail use and development must be compatible and sustainable with the characteristics of the landscape. It shall be the policy of the Forestry Committee to consider opportunities for the following motorized trail use:

- Snowmobiles
- All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's)
- Motorcycles

- Motorbikes
- Vehicles licensed for public roadways

Refer to Chapter 700 for further discussion on motorized recreation opportunities on the Sawyer County Forest.

#### 510.5.2 Non-Motorized Trail Opportunities

Non-motorized travel on trails is a legitimate use of the County Forest. Design and maintenance of these trails may highlight natural features present on the County Forest, should minimize damage to the environment and reduce user conflict. Trail use and development must be compatible and sustainable with the characteristics of the landscape. It shall be the policy of the Forestry Committee to consider opportunities for the following types of non-motorized trail use:

- Skiing
- Hiking
- Biking
- Hunter Walking
- Snowshoeing
- Running

Refer to Chapter 700 for further discussion on non-motorized recreation opportunities on the Sawyer County Forest.

#### 510.6 RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Sawyer County will reasonably comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations. In addition, it is the policy of the Forestry Committee to provide recreational opportunities for people with permanent disabilities wherever feasible and environmentally possible.

### **515 SPECIAL USES**

Recognizing the vast potential for a variety of special uses of the County Forest by

governmental units, businesses, organizations or individuals, the Forestry Committee may designate specified areas for special uses. Specific management methods are to be considered on these areas. Uses must be consistent with the intent of the County Forest Law. All requests for specialized uses of any County Forest lands will require a permit authorized by the Forestry Committee. A list of existing special use areas is appended in Chapter 900.

#### 515.1 SAND AND GRAVEL

Sand and gravel pits located on the County Forest may be used only by units of government or contractors performing public works. Use of existing pits and the opening of new pits by other than the County Forestry Department will require Forestry Committee approval and be authorized by permit only. The condition of such permits may include but are not limited to:

- Requiring the pit and its access road to be screened from view from any public highway
- Severing trees from the stump
- Disposition of brush and dirt spoil by leveling or hauling away
- Sloping to prevent steep banks
- Filing with the Forestry Office an annual written report of gravel and sand removed

Other conditions may be set at the discretion of the Forestry Committee or County Forest Administrator. The Forestry Committee may set fees for materials removed. Other non-metaliferous materials will be dealt with on an individual basis.

All active, nonmetallic sites greater than one (1) acre in size, including those on the County Forest, are also subject to the provisions of the Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Program, Chapter NR 135, Wis. Admin. Code. The County Forestry Department shall work with the local permit coordinator (often County or local Zoning office) in obtaining the necessary permits for nonmetallic mining operations.

#### 515.2 EXPLORATION, PROSPECTING AND MINING

- The Forestry Committee may investigate all mineral exploration, prospecting and mining requests as they are received.
- The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) shall be notified of all requests as they become known in accordance with Manual Code 2712.1 (mineral exploration on County Forests per s. 28.11(3)(i), Wis. Stats.) or other codes which may be subsequently adopted.

The Public Forest Lands Handbook should be referenced for a more detailed procedure.

#### 515.3 SANITARY LANDFILLS

The use of County Forest lands for sanitary landfills will not be allowed. The lands must first be withdrawn from the County Forest Law.

#### 515.4 MILITARY MANEUVERS

Military maneuvers on County Forest lands will be considered under a Lease or Written Land Use Agreement. Upon receipt of a written request from the Military, the Forestry Committee, other necessary County staff, Military and Department of Natural Resource (DNR) representatives will discuss the issues at a public Forestry Committee meeting. After the needs have been outlined, the site shall be field checked, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) input and consistency with the County Forest Law sought, and Town officials advised. Depending on the scope of the project, a public hearing may be appropriate. If all aspects and concerns are addressed and agreed to, a legal instrument will be drafted. The matter will then be brought back to a Forestry Committee meeting for final input and approval. The Public Forest Lands Handbook 2460.5, Chapter 270 will be used for further direction in this matter.

#### 515.5 PUBLIC UTILITIES

Easements for public utilities will be considered by the Forestry Committee. Underground installations will be encouraged. The following main provisions

shall be included in any County Board of Supervisors resolution granting permission for construction of any utility transmission line:

- Utility may be billed for merchantable Forest products and existing timber reproduction.
- Utility may be billed for land removed from production due to right-of-way clearing for losses of future income and multiple use benefits.
- Land removed from utility operations that is no longer suited "primarily for timber production, or that is no longer suitable for scenic, outdoor recreation, public hunting and fishing, water conservation or multiple use purposes" (s. 28.11(4)(c), Wis. Stats.) may need to be withdrawn from County Forest Law designation. The utility shall replace any lands requiring withdrawal from County Forest Blocking of the County Forest.
- Utility companies will be encouraged to use existing corridors and underground lines to minimize disturbance of the County Forest and native plants and animals.
- Merchantable timber will be removed in a manner approved by the Forestry Committee. Timber cut must be reported to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on Form 2460-1.
- Utility must provide notice of proposed route, including a map of not less than one (1) inch/mile scale, ninety (90) days in advance of proposed construction.
- Special maintenance, controlled access and signage concerns shall be addressed in any proposal.
- An appropriate fee shall be charged for easements.

#### 515.6 PRIVATE UTILITY SERVICE LINES

If a landowner cannot gain utility access across other lands, the Forestry Committee may consider a Land Use Agreement for access across County Forest. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. These agreements should consider the inclusions mentioned in Section 515 for easements as well as:

- The permit is non-transferable.

- The County retains full ownership of the utility corridor; however, it shall not be liable for maintenance, upkeep, or other damages associated with the utility service.
- The permittee waives any rights to any declaration of ownership or interest in the utility corridor on County land for administrative costs as a result of this Land Use Agreement - Utility permit. This agreement is granted upon the signature and any fees being received by Sawyer County.
- The fee for such a Land Use Agreement is set by the Forestry Committee.
- The standard Land Use Agreement for utility access is included as an exhibit in Chapter 900.

#### 515.7 CELLULAR COMMUNICATION TOWERS

The siting of cellular communication towers on the Sawyer County Forest will be considered by the Forestry Committee on a limited basis. The Forestry Committee will consider company requests on a case-by-case basis and make a decision as appropriate. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to the following conditions:

- It must be demonstrated that the site is the most practical location for such a tower.
- Land selected for such a tower is no longer suitable for continued entry in the County Forest Law program. In addition, any accompanying lands needed for tower support wires that inhibit the practice of Forestry and are no longer suitable for scenic, outdoor recreation, public hunting and fishing, water conservation or multiple use purposes (s. 28.11(4), Wis. Stats.) may also need to be withdrawn from the County Forest Law. Withdrawal is subject to approval by both the County Board of Supervisors and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The cellular communication company shall replace any lands requiring withdrawal from County Forest with other lands suitable for County Forest entry that are in the Forest Blocking.
  - Any agreement should also consider the inclusions under 515.5.

### 515.8 OTHER

Other types of special uses of the County Forest may be considered by the Forestry Committee. These may include, but are not limited to: research, independent study, scientific areas, parks, etc.. Regulations governing these uses will be developed on an individual basis.

## **520 AESTHETIC FOREST MANAGEMENT**

Aesthetic Forest Management will be applied to the County Forest as detailed in this section.

The purpose of Aesthetic Management is to minimize negative aesthetic impacts of timber harvesting or other Forest development projects. This is typically accomplished by modifying the timing, design, or intensity of the harvest or development practice. The goal of the County Forestry Committee will be to protect and/or enhance the aesthetic value of this unique natural resources, within reason. However, the overriding accountability of the Forestry Committee is the entire Forest eco-system and managing the balance of this system in the best interest of current and future residents, property owners, visitor to the Forest and the State of Wisconsin.

The aesthetic classification system used in this Plan places all land in the Forest into either Aesthetic Management Zones A, B, or C. (Zone D classification as described in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Silvicultural Handbook is combined into the Zone A classification in this Plan). Land is placed into one (1) of the three (3) zones based on a number of factors including intensity of public use, type of recreational use, unique or scenic features, or visibility from a State or County Highway.

Whether or not Aesthetic Management Practices are implemented, or the degree to which Aesthetic Practices are implemented, is based on the site's Aesthetic Zone Classification. Sites that are located adjacent to an intensive public use area (e.g. American Birkebeiner Trail or Nelson Lake), or an area that may have

low public use but has exceptional scenic values (e.g. Weirgor Lake or a remote Natural Area) may be classified a Zone A and require strict Aesthetic Management Practices. Other areas located in remote areas of the Forest where the public makes infrequent visits and there are no unique resources present, may be classified as a Zone C area and may not require that any Aesthetic Management Practice to utilized.

520.1 CLASS A ZONES

Class A Aesthetic Zones include areas where there is intensive public presence or use, or areas with unique or scenic values. In Class A Aesthetic Zones, maximizing timber production may not be a non-primary goal. The primary goal of management will be either for scenic values, for the preservation or conservation of a unique resource itself, or for the betterment of the recreation facility itself. For recreational facilities placed in the Zone A classification, timber will be managed to afford the greatest scenic potential for public enjoyment, but not to the detriment of the recreational trail or facility itself, or the public's safety. (For Aesthetic Policy – American Birkebeiner Trail see Chapter 900).

"Boundaries" for a Class A Zone may include the area within the reasonable visible horizon of the use area. The Class A Zone may also include adjacent areas that receive a considerable amount of use as a result of the recreation area.

<b>CLASS A ZONES</b>	<b>Defined Boundary</b>
American Birkebeiner Trail Corridor	150 feet from trail edge on both sides of trail
Nelson Lake Shoreline	100 feet from ordinary high water mark
Weirgor Lake Shoreline	100 feet from ordinary high water mark
Hatchery Creek County Park	Undefined
Thornapple River	100 feet from ordinary high water mark
State Hwy 27, 63, 70 and 77 corridors	50 feet from highway right-of-way boundary

#### 520.1.1 Permitted Uses – Class A Zone

- Timber harvesting related to Forestry regeneration practices
- Road and trail construction
- County directional, informational and recreational signs conforming to approved standards
- Borrow pits are discouraged, but may be approved by the Forestry Committee on a site-specific basis if reasonable alternate sites are not available.

#### 520.1.2 Restrictions - Class A Zone

- Timber harvesting and other development may be prohibited during periods of peak public use.
- All slash must be lopped to within eighteen (18) inches of the ground and/or removed from view.
- Log landings are to be no closer than one hundred (100) feet from the affected facility without permission of the Forestry Committee.
- All tree and shrub planting will be spaced at random to enhance a natural appearance.
- New access roads will be permitted if they join the main road at right angles. All such access roads will be, when possible, curved so that no cleared line of sight will be created from the main road to the exterior boundary of the zone.
- Borrow pits are only allowed during the time a road is under construction. When any borrow operation is completed the site will be restored pursuant to Chapter NR 135, Wis. Adm. Code and must aesthetically conform to general use of the area. Permanent pits shall be located outside the Class A Zone boundaries and screened from the Class A Zone.

#### 520.2 CLASS B ZONES

Class B Aesthetic Zones will be recreational trails or navigable waterways within

the County Forest that are not used or viewed by the public as intensively as Class A Zones. Timber harvesting is considered of equal importance to the recreational use of these zones. Aesthetic practices are accomplished with some minor harvesting or design modifications to retain some level of scenic attractiveness.

<b>CLASS B ZONES</b>	<b>Defined Boundary</b>
All waterways not designated as Zone A	75 feet from ordinary high water mark

520.2.1 Permitted Uses – Class B Zone

- All land management activities are permissible but should be exercised with sensitivity to aesthetics and maintaining the long-term quality of the trail surface.

520.2.2 Restrictions – Class B Zone

- Sales must be designed where possible to create irregular harvest lines to soften aesthetic impacts
- Slash must be removed within ten (10) feet of trail's edge
- Slash must be lopped to within twenty-five (25) inches of the ground
- Roads and landings must be rehabilitated by implementing erosion control and vegetation (seeding) practices
- Silvicultural practices must be implemented that will encourage growth and regeneration of species/timber types that are long-lived and can be managed by thinnings or selection harvests

520.3 CLASS C ZONES

The majority of the Forest is classified as Zone C. Zone C includes all parts of the Forest not contained in Zones A or B. Logging, hunting, snowmobiling, ATV riding and bike riding (CAMBA) are generally the most common uses of Zone C areas.

The primary management objectives in Zone C are to optimize timber production and wildlife habitat using Sustainable Forestry and Wildlife Habitat Management Practices. Implementation of special Aesthetic Management Practices in Class C Aesthetic Zones is not normally a high priority. Sawyer County Forest standard timber sale contract language regarding maximum allowable stump heights, slash heights and placement, road rehabilitation responsibilities, and Water Quality Best Management Practices contribute to a minimum Aesthetic Management Standard for Zone C. Other opportunities to maintain or enhance scenic quality should be considered and implemented where practical, but are not required.

520.3.1 Permitted Uses - Zone C

All land management activities that are consistent with the goals of the County Forest are allowed.

520.3.2 Restrictions - Zone C

No special aesthetic management practices are required.

**525 TREATY RIGHTS: GATHERING MISCELLANEOUS FOREST PRODUCTS**

Any Treaty Rights Participant interested in gathering firewood, tree bark, maple sap, lodge poles, boughs, marsh hay or other miscellaneous Forest products (except fruits, seeds, or berries not enumerated in County Ordinances) from County land shall obtain a County Gathering Permit from the County Forestry office. Fees are waived for current Tribal Members. The County shall respond to the Gathering Permit request no later than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The Gathering Permit (see Chapter 900) shall indicate the location of the material to be gathered, the volume of material to be gathered, and conditions of the gathering of the material necessary for conservation of the timber and miscellaneous Forest products on the County land, or for public health or safety.

The County may not deny a request to gather miscellaneous Forest products on

County property under this section unless:

- The gathering is inconsistent with the Best Management Practices plan for the property.
- The gathering will conflict with the pre-existing rights of a permittee or other person possessing an approval to conduct an activity on the property, including a contractor for the County.
- Is otherwise inconsistent with conservation and public health or safety.

### **530 HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS/AREAS (HCVF) and EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCES**

High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) is a term that identifies those areas possessing unique qualities locally, regionally, or nationally. Sawyer County's focus in managing these areas will be to maintain or enhance the qualities that make these areas special. In some instances, this may involve altering management practices to mitigate impacts and in others it may entail no active management.

Exceptional Resources contain such things as high conservation value forests, wild rivers and lakes, significant geological features, natural areas, ruffed grouse management areas, historical and archeological sites. HCVF contain such communities as relict old-growth forest; habitat for endangered, threatened, and species of greatest conservation need; oak and pine barrens, natural origin pine stands; rare natural communities, such as central poor fen, forested seeps, white pine swamps, bedrock glades, large muskegs, shorelines of wild rivers and lakes, and animal concentration spots. It is the policy of Sawyer County to manage these types of resources and protect their individual exceptional features.

#### **530.1 AREAS HIGH IN LOCALLY, REGIONALLY OR NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT BIODIVERSITY VALUES**

### 530.1.1 Wisconsin State Natural Areas

Sawyer County manages a variety of property designations including Wisconsin State Natural Areas (SNA's). The SNA system represents the wealth and variety of Wisconsin's biological diversity. They contain outstanding examples of native biotic communities and are often the last refuges in the state for rare and endangered plant and animal species. The Wisconsin SNA program works with counties to further recognize outstanding native biotic communities that Sawyer County is presently managing as exceptional resources. SNA's are unique in that they can exist as stand alone properties or be designated within the boundaries of another property type. Sawyer County maintains its land ownership, management and decision-making authority, but with cooperative recognition of these sites the County can enhance its ability to provide a broader range of opportunities for the citizens.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Endangered Resources staff will work cooperatively with the County Forest by coordinating educational, monitoring, and research activities. Assistance on management projects can provide the county with more resources to accomplish necessary management. Management will protect the unique character of the area. The importance of Wisconsin State Natural Areas has been recognized on the County Forest by cooperating with Department staff in designating and managing the eighty-two (82) acres of the County Forest for two (2) SNA sites.

### 530.1.2 Totogatic River Hemlock

The Totogatic River Hemlocks is a forty (40) acre relict of old-growth stand of hemlock and white cedar. The 2004 Statewide Forest Plan calls for protection of all relict old-growth stands. Sawyer County has protected this site for decades, as has the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands that own the adjacent forty (40) acres in Bayfield County. These type of natural communities have received little recognition for their ecological

reference attributes in the past. The site will continue to be given special recognition as a Wisconsin State Natural Area (SNA) and the same passive management that the County has applied for decades will continue. A map of the site can be found in Chapter 900.

#### 530.1.3 Osgood Springs

The feature of primary interest is a series of interconnected spring ponds that from the headwaters of McDermott Brook. Extension wetlands of alder, willow, and conifer swamp along with open sedge meadow occupy the remainder of the site. The high quality nature of the springs and surrounding wetland communities combined with excellent forb diversity makes this spring site one of the best in the state. These types of natural communities have received little recognition for their ecological reference attributes in the past. The Wisconsin State Natural Areas (SNA) program has gaps in this ecological landscape for springs. A cooperative recognition could benefit both programs. The site will continue to be given special recognition as a Wisconsin State Natural Area. A map of the site can be found in Chapter 900.

#### 530.1.4 Species Concentration Areas

Sawyer County will apply special restrictions on disturbances if any bat hibernacula, herp hibernacula, or bird rookeries are found. Presently no such concentration places have been found on the County Forest.

#### 530.1.5 Other

Additional sites are known that contain rare species habitat or native communities that the County may consider for special management. These include:

##### 530.1.5.1 Camp Smith - Deadman Lakes Natural Pine Area

The northern part of the County Forest contains many patches of natural origin red and white pine. Pines of natural origin are

uncommon in the State and are becoming more rare every year. This type of pine forest is considered a high conservation value forest. Even though management is needed to maintain the cover types, management plans should consider development of old-growth characteristics and natural regeneration methods. The site could develop into a landscape pinery management area. Bureau of Endangered Resources (BER) biologists would be available to provide assistance in planning should the County choose to develop such an area.

#### 530.1.5.2 Log Creek Drumlins

This site contains a large open black spruce muskeg. Nearly the full complement of acid bog plants is found at this site. Patches of lower wet areas harbor poor fen species. Current management practices should maintain this site.

### 530.2 RARE, THREATENED, OR ENDANGERED ECOSYSTEMS

#### 530.2.1 Relict Old Growth Stands

One site, Totogatic River Hemlocks has been given special recognition as a Wisconsin State Natural Area (SNA). Other acres of eastern hemlock and white cedar stands will be maintained. Hemlock is important to the diversity of our northern hardwood stands and provides needed habitat for many species, including migratory songbirds and a seed source for regeneration. Management is currently keyed to maintaining hemlock as a component of northern hardwood stands and improving the health and vigor of individual trees and islands of trees. Regeneration is dependent on overcoming high deer populations. Silvicultural techniques in conjunction with repellents, fencing, and/or bud capping may prove useful in regenerating hemlock and enhancing its presence on the County Forest.

Cedar is equally important to the diversity of our forested wetlands and

provides needed habitat for many species, including migratory songbirds and a seed source for regeneration. With regard to the difficulties in regenerating white cedar, due mostly to high deer populations, these stands are currently not being harvested. Regeneration is dependent on overcoming high deer populations. Silvicultural techniques in conjunction with repellents, fencing, and/or bud capping may prove useful in regenerating white cedar and enhancing its presence on the County Forest.

#### 530.2.3 Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat

As part of, and in addition to, the unique natural communities listed in Chapter 530.1, rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal species exist in the Sawyer County Forest. A complete species list and their Wisconsin status can be found in Chapter 900.

#### 530.2.4 Geological Features of Significance

With regards to Pitted Outwash and Kettle Lakes in to the west and north of Lake Chetac, the County will need to decide if it's appropriate to limit roads and gravel extraction.

#### 530.2.6 Important Bird Area

The Important Bird Areas (IBA) program is a global initiative that links local and state conservation efforts to national and international efforts to protect essential habitat for all birds. The IBA program is a voluntary, cooperative initiative that aims to identify and protect those sites that are most important to birds in any stage of their life cycle. These sites are considered to be exceptionally significant for bird conservation.

The entire Blue Hills has been nominated as an Important Bird Area. In addition, a breeding bird survey recorded fifteen (15) species of neo-tropical migrant warbler, which are about ninety (90) percent of the possible warbler species for this latitude. Unusual was the high numbers

of Louisiana Waterthrush. The Blue Hills represents a significant range extension for this southern Wisconsin species. During the breeding bird surveys, different structural patterns were assessed for bird species composition. Two harvest areas appeared to have much different effects on warbler utilization. An area of unconventional even-age forest management had the well-documented species that utilize very early successional forest. Whereas, the other area had selectively removed the aspen component and leaving many hardwoods had a very diverse warbler concentration including all the early successional species.

Sawyer County's devised management regime appears to have substantial benefits for neo-tropical migrant warblers. In addition, pockets of hemlock, black spruce, tamarack and other conifers significantly add to the species diversity.

The IBA generally encompasses the Blue Hills Sections 21-24, 28-25 and 32-36, Township 37 North, Range 9 West in Edgewater Township, and Section 19, 29-32 of Meteor Township. Sawyer County voluntarily recognizes this IBA. Timber management and recreation opportunities will continue, although some activities may be modified to accommodate nesting birds or enhance bird habitat. An example is to promote denser sapling layers by managing different gap sizes for more diverse warbler habitat. Existing areas of heavy aspen dominance would continue to be managed for aspen. This recognition does not affect any private land, although private landowners may choose to voluntarily participate in the IBA program.

### 530.3 CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT FEATURES -

Management implications associated with these designations are included in Chapter 800 of this Plan.

530.3.1 Burial Mounds/Cemeteries

- None have been identified at this time.

530.3.2 Logging Camps

- None have been identified at this time.

530.3.3 Landmarks

- None have been identified at this time.

530.3.4 Other

- CCC Camp Smith Lake
- Dynamite Storage Shed

530.4 LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT SITES

530.4.1 Areas Requiring Protection not included above

It is the policy of Sawyer County to manage these type resources to enhance and protect their individual exceptional features. A review of the State Historical Society database will be conducted on all timber sales.

Exceptional Resources include such things as wild rivers and lakes, natural areas, ruffed grouse and wild turkey management areas, areas of unique geological features, historical, and archeological sites. It is the policy of Sawyer County to manage these types of resources to enhance and protect their individual exceptional features.