

CHIPPEWA COUNTY FOREST COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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CHAPTER 900

RECREATION

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## **900 RECREATION**

Recreation is an integral part of the management of the Chippewa County Forest and recreation uses are referenced in most of the previous chapters. Due to the tremendous growth in recreational demands over the duration of the last planning period, this plan recognizes the importance of more intensive recreational planning and emphasizes its importance with a separate chapter.

## **905 PLANNING**

In addition to this plan, the *Chippewa County Outdoor Recreation Plan* (CCORP) also guides the recreation program. This plan is revised every five (5) years and is made part of this plan. The CCORP includes, but is not limited to, activities in the County Forest. It incorporates snowmobile and ATV plans, campgrounds, parks and boat landings, recreational maintenance and development plans and other recreation surveys and reports.

The CCORP, *Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP), public input, and other local or regional planning documents will be used as resources in recreational planning and development efforts. The responsibility for recreational planning, development and maintenance in the County Forest rests with the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee.

## **910 AUTHORITY**

Chapter 16 of the Chippewa County Code of Ordinances and s. 28.11 Wis. Stats, authorize the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee to provide recreational opportunities for the public. This authority is further recognized in the mission statement for the County Forest Plan (Chapter 100), which specifically identifies outdoor recreational opportunities. This mission statement also charges the Committee to conduct activities in a manner that prevents or minimizes environmental damage. Maps of the recreational facilities managed through the Chippewa County Forest program are referenced in the Appendix, Chapter 1000.

**915 ENTRANCE AND USER FEES**

The Committee is empowered and shall have responsibility for establishing entrance, camping and other user fees on recreational facilities maintained by the County Forest. Camping, entrance or other fees shall be comparable to fees charged by other County Forests and are subject to periodic change by the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee. Fees or donations, where appropriate, will be utilized to assist in the maintenance of recreational facilities.

**920 RECREATIONAL SERVICE AGREEMENTS**

It is permissible for the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee to contract with clubs or individuals to provide for recreational maintenance or services to the public. As part of the plan, the County uses maintenance agreements to contract with local organizations for the following services:

1. Snowmobile trail grooming and maintenance.
2. ATV trail grading and maintenance.
3. Ice Age National Scenic Trail maintenance.
4. Hickory Ridge Ski Trail grooming and maintenance.
5. Hickory Ridge Bike Trail maintenance – under development.

**925 RECREATIONAL USE PERMITS FOR ORGANIZED EVENTS**

Any event in the County Forest which is advertised to the public, for which a fee is charged or is otherwise organized as an event, requires a permit or authorization by the Committee. Permits may be issued by the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee, subject to Corporation Counsel and Department of Administration approval, provided the use is consistent with management activities and will not cause resource damage. Appropriate levels of event liability insurance is required.

## **930 EXTENSIVE RECREATIONAL USE OF THE FOREST**

Extensive recreation includes those informal activities for which the County generally does not provide a facility or service. These uses include activities such as hunting, fishing, biking, hiking and others. These uses do not require a permit but must be conducted in compliance with ordinances. The County Forest Administrator and the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee shall periodically review such uses and enact ordinances as necessary to protect from resource damage.

### **930.1 HUNTING**

The entire County Forest is open for regulated hunting, with the exception of areas developed for high public use such as parks, campgrounds, and some special use areas. It is the County's intent to adopt State guidance regulating temporary hunting stands in the County Forest. Temporary hunting stands, including elevated stands are permissible. The use of nails, lag screws, screw steps, or other damaging devices is not permitted. No permanent type structures are permitted. The [\*Code of Chippewa County\*](#) regulates activities relating to hunting. Refer to Chapter 1000 for a full text of the Ordinance. The use of firearms, airguns, slingshots or bows and arrows is prohibited in designated County Parks, except on permit issued by the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee. Discharge of firearms is prohibited in Kemper's Woods: hunting by archery only is allowed for wild turkey from the beginning of Spring Turkey Season through the first Sunday in May and September 30 through the end of the Fall season, and for whitetail deer from November 1 through the end of archery season.

### **930.2 FISHING**

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

### 930.3 PICNICKING/DAY USE

Picnicking and other day uses, outside of established facilities is allowed. The *Code of Chippewa County* also regulates day use. In general, the following activities are regulated:

1. All litter, trash or rubbish must be removed.
2. Cutting or harvesting vegetation is not permitted.
3. Fires may not be left unattended unless the ground is 100% snow covered.

### 930.4 CAMPING

Camping on Chippewa County Forest land is permitted, except near County Parks or unless otherwise designated or posted by the Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee. No permit is required to camp. The following general rules will apply to all County Forest campers:

1. No littering or site destruction will be tolerated.
2. The County Board may set a permit fee upon the recommendation of the Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee.
3. Maximum camping period is fourteen (14) consecutive days.
4. Natural vegetation and terrain may not be cut, damaged or altered in any way, except for the construction of an adequate fire ring using rocks. Fasteners such as nails, screws or bolts may not be attached to trees.
5. Manufactured materials (lumber, concrete, plastics, etc.) may not be left on the site when it is vacated. No trees or other vegetation, either native or exotic, may be planted on the County Forest land without permission from the County.

### 930.5 MOTORIZED TRAVEL

The Code of Chippewa County regulates motorized uses in the County Forest. The full text of these regulations is included in the Appendix, Chapter 1000. In general, the following regulations apply to motorized travel outside of a developed recreational trail system.

1. It is illegal to operate a motor vehicle on a trail designated closed with a gate, earthen berm, sign, or other closure.

2. Two-wheeled motorized travel (motorcycles, mini bikes, dirt bikes) is not permitted unless the machine is street legal and operating on a Primary County Forest Road.

#### 930.6 OTHER USES

Other uses of the County Forest are permitted provided they are not specifically addressed with the Code of Chippewa County. The County Board may, at any time, enact ordinances to protect the County Forest should damage begin to occur.

### 935 INTENSIVE RECREATION AREAS/USES

Intensive recreation includes those uses for which the County provides a trail or facility. The Chippewa County Forest has developed sites and areas to accommodate a fairly high degree of public use. The Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee may prohibit other recreation activities that are not compatible with the intent of the developed facilities.

The Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee and the Forest & Trails Division has noted a marked increase in demand for recreation facilities. Chippewa County may attempt to develop additional facilities and will maintain its currently developed facilities. All parks in the County Forest are in Special Management Units and are managed by the Facilities and Parks Division of the Department of Administration.

#### 935.1 CAMPGROUNDS

Otter Lake County Park is located at 35309 170<sup>th</sup> Avenue Stanley, WI 54768. The park facilities include twenty-two (22) campsites, shelters, electricity, flushable toilets, pit toilets, swimming beach, fishing pier, boat landing, playground, firewood sales, and a nature trail. The facility is fee-based for camping and day use.



#### 935.2 PICNIC/DAY USE AREAS

Round Lake County Park is located at 28614 117<sup>th</sup> Street New Auburn, WI 54757. The park facilities include shelters, boat landing, pit toilets, electricity, fishing pier and a swimming beach.

#### 935.3 SWIMMING AREAS/BEACHES

There are swimming beaches in the County Forest at Round Lake and Otter Lake County parks.

#### 935.4 BOAT LANDINGS

As a result of the wide distribution of lakes, streams, rivers, and other surface waters in the Forest, water access may be planned, developed, or restricted as a component of the overall County Forest access management plan. Several boat landings, canoe landings, and adjacent roads currently provide water access on the Forest primarily for recreational activities. In addition, these water access points also provide water supply points for fire apparatus working to suppress forest fires or nearby structural fires.

The existing water access points will be maintained to provide a place to launch a small fishing boat or canoe. Not all watercraft will be able to use these access points. These landings are built for public use and not for private boat mooring sites. Mooring or storing boats for longer than twenty-four (24) hours is prohibited.

The following public boat access sites have been developed in the Chippewa County Forest or are under the Chippewa County Department of Land Conservation & Forest Management's jurisdiction and are open to public use: Bass Lake #2, Bass Lake #3, Hay Meadow Flowage #1, Horseshoe Lake, Knickerbocker Lake, Townline Lake, Old Abe, Otter Lake, and Round Lake. There are many other boat access sites outside the County Forest which are owned and maintain by the Parks & Facilities Division, DNR or local Towns. A map of locations can be found in the *Chippewa County Outdoor Recreation Plan*.

Other undeveloped water access points for canoes and boats currently exist in the County Forest. These are used routinely to hand launch boats or canoes but have not been developed for boat trailer launching. These sites are not routinely maintained and may be closed if erosion damage becomes severe. The County Forest Administrator will develop an inventory of permanent secondary roads with potential to create vehicular access to developed boat landings, with additional routes and grants to be considered, then will submit grant proposals for funding to be reviewed by the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee.

#### 935.5 WAYSIDES/TRAILHEADS

Waysides and trailheads are day use areas with parking and other amenities, several have pit toilets, to provide access to the County Forest and designated trails for public use. Locations include: Bass Lake #3, Bradley Lake, Dog Island Lake Trailhead, Hay Meadow #2 Trailhead, Hay Meadow #3 Trailhead, Hickory Ridge Trailhead, Highway M ATV Trailhead, Kemper's Woods, Lowland Lake, Lake Wissota Old Abe Trailhead, O'Neil Creek ATV Trailhead, Townline Lake, Riverview Reserve.

#### 940 UNDESIGNATED USE AND DESIGNATED RECREATION TRAILS

Designated recreation trails are those for which the County provides a designated trail and/or facility. The County currently provides trail systems that accommodate a fairly high degree of public use. The Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee may prohibit other activities on these trails that are not compatible with the intent of the development.

Whenever possible, multiple uses of various trail systems are encouraged and are subject to policy review of the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee. Wherever possible, attempts will be made to avoid user conflicts and involve user groups in management planning. Recreational users, however, will frequently encounter forest management activities instrumental to the existence and future of the County Forest. Trail systems are identified in the Appendix, Chapter 1000.

## 940.1 NON-MOTORIZED RECREATION TRAILS

The Chippewa County Forest is a multiple use forest. Non-motorized recreation trails are a legitimate use of the forest. Design and maintenance of these trails may highlight natural features present in the County Forest, should minimize damage, and reduce user conflict. Trail use and development must be compatible and sustainable with the characteristics of the landscape. It is the policy of the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee to manage non-motorized recreation trails in the County Forest.

### 940.1.1 Hiking Trails

#### 940.1.1.1 Undesignated Hiking Trails

All of the County Forest is open to hiking or foot travel, unless marked with signs closing an area.

#### 940.1.1.2 Designated Hiking Trails

##### Ice Age National Scenic Trail

A portion of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail (IANST) has been developed across the Chippewa County Forest. The trail has been developed and is maintained under a Land Use Agreement with the Ice Age Alliance, Inc, the agreement is available upon request to the County Forest Administrator. This segment of trail is part of a system of trails across Wisconsin, linking units of the Ice Age National Scientific Reserve. The trail is primarily used for hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

The long-term goal for the IANST is to be a continuous footpath that meets Federal and State legislative intent - that it be a “premier” hiking trail of national significance in its scenic and recreational qualities, follows the authorized route highlighting moraines and other glacial features and is closed to motorized use by the general public. All of the IANST within the Chippewa County Forest has obtained trail certification from the National Park Service (NPS). Under this

certification and the Land Use Agreement, Chippewa County and the Ice Age Alliance, Inc. agree that the trail should be designed and maintained to follow the guidelines of the *Ice Age National Scenic Trail: A Handbook for Trail Design, Construction and Maintenance*, which lays out the trail standards, as put forth by the NPS. Management practices on and adjacent to the trail will be designed to maintain the character of the landscape and minimize disruption to the trail and its users. The trail corridor is designated as Aesthetic Management Zone B, which is referenced in Chapter 800.

The IANST crosses the County Forest in Sections 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the Town of Cleveland, Sections 31, 32, 33 and 36 in the Town of Birch Creek and Sections 26 and 35 in the Town of Sampson. The trail is both a National and State Scenic Trail and follows the end moraines of the most recent glacial period in Wisconsin. It is intended to provide a high quality walking experience across Wisconsin.

In the past, portions of the trail were routed on old logging roads to minimize the cost of construction and, in some cases, because the roads accessed scenic or important glacial features. These secondary roads are typically used on a periodic basis and are easy to maintain by revegetating after timber harvests.

The County Forest timber sale program periodically impacts trail sections when the roads are needed for access to timber sales. Use of the trail for timber harvesting will comply with the restrictions designated in the Land Use Agreement. Inclusions in timber sale contracts will maintain trail markers and require daily clearing and maintenance of the trail. When active harvesting and hauling is occurring, appropriate signing will be installed by the County informing trail users of truck traffic and harvesting activity. To avoid user conflict and safety concerns, it may be necessary to temporarily re-route the trail during active harvesting. Re-routing requires substantial work by volunteers and tends to confuse trail users and therefore, should be used only when necessary.

## 940.1.2 Bicycle Trails

### 940.1.2.1 Undesignated Bicycle Trails

If not posted to prohibit travel, all trails, roads and fire lanes are open for recreational bicycle use. Off-trail bicycle use may be restricted in a specific area if use causes erosion, environmental damage or user conflict.

### 940.1.2.2 Designated Bicycle Trails

The Old Abe State Trail is a cooperative effort between the State of Wisconsin and Chippewa County, and is part of the eighty (80) mile Chippewa Valley Trail System stretching from Cornell to Menomonie. The trail is 19.5 miles of paved abandoned railroad grade which connects Lake Wissota State Park with Brunett Island State Park. It has been developed for use by bicycles, snowmobiles, hikers, horse riders and in-line skaters. The trail winds through agricultural and forest land while following the eastern shoreline of the Chippewa River and lies outside the Blocking Boundary of the County Forest. The trail is owned by the State and operated by Chippewa County, which is responsible for routine maintenance under a Cooperative Easement and Memorandum of Understanding with the DNR.

The Hickory Ridge Bike Trails have been developed and maintained by the Chippewa Off Road Bicycle Association (CORBA). There are approximately fifteen (15) miles of single-track mountain bike trails accessible from the Hickory Ridge Trailhead, which is located on the north side of 225<sup>th</sup> Ave., approximately 0.6 miles west of 175<sup>th</sup> Street in the Town of Cleveland. The trail network is also groomed for fat-tire biking in the Winter. Subject to approval by the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee CORBA anticipates expanding the single-track trails, running roughly parallel to the North Ski Loop and Dog Island trails, in order to provide more opportunities for a growing number of users.

The Area 178 trail network is not part of the County Forest, but the Riverview Conservancy is managed by the Forest & Trails Division. CORBA has developed and maintained approximately eight (8) miles of single-track trails in Chippewa County, Northern States Power Company and St. Joseph's Hospital properties are adjacent the Chippewa River and Lake Wissota Dam.

### 940.1.3 Equestrian/Horseback Riding Trails

#### 940.1.3.1 Undesignated Equestrian/Horseback Riding Trails

There are no undesignated trails for horseback riding in the County Forest. All horseback riding is restricted to designated trails only.

#### 940.1.3.2 Designated Equestrian/Horseback Riding Trails

Chippewa County has worked with the Chippewa Valley Trail Riders (CVTR) to develop and maintain the Hay Meadow Horse Trail system, which provides approximately twenty-five (25) miles of designated horseback riding trail in the County Forest. The trail network was recently expanded approximately three (3) miles through Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee approval and a Memorandum of Understanding between CVTR and the Ice Age Alliance to allow shared use of approximately 2,700 feet of existing IANST. Subject to approval by the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee, CVTR anticipates expanding the current trail network an additional five (5) miles on secondary forest roads adjacent to current approved trails. There are two (2) trailheads with parking and horse manure containment structures at Hay Meadow #2 and Hay Meadow #3. Hay Meadow #2 also has pit toilets. All trails are closed to horseback riding when the ground is snow covered.

The Old Abe State Trail has approximately 5.5 miles of horse trail running parallel to the adjacent abandoned railroad grade. The trail runs from the Lake Wissota Trailhead to the Jim Falls Trailhead. Routine maintenance is performed by the Forest & Trails Division.

#### 940.1.4 Cross-Country Ski Trails

##### 940.1.4.1 Undesignated Cross-Country Ski Trails

All trails in the County Forest, except snowmobile trails, are open for cross-country skiing. Cross country skiing on groomed snowmobile trails is not permitted due to safety concerns.

##### 940.1.4.2 Designated Cross-Country Ski Trails

The Friends of Hickory Ridge Trail, Inc. (FOHRT) have partnered with Chippewa County on the development and routine maintenance of the Hickory Ridge Cross Country Ski Trails. The network provides multiple loops of rolling to steep grades totaling approximately twenty-seven (27) kilometers of trails. When snow conditions allow FOHRT performs trail surfacing and track setting so that the system is groomed for both traditional Nordic (set track) and skating (flat deck) styles of skiing. Dogs are not allowed on this well-groomed trail network. No fees are required but FOHRT has been granted permission to collect donations at the trailhead to be used for maintenance of the trails.

The River Road Cross Country Ski Trail is located approximately 2.5 miles north of Cornell in the Harold Walters Memorial Forest. Approximately 5.6 kilometers of trail is groomed by local volunteers or sometimes by Forest & Trail Division staff, if resources are available. Dogs are allowed on this ski trail network.

#### 940.1.5 Canoe Trail

In the late 1980's, Chippewa County utilized Wisconsin Conservation Corps labor to construct the Townline-Knickerbocker Canoe Trail to provide access to several lakes with viable fisheries in that area. Poor access for portaging and unnavigable routes due to emergent vegetation, floating bogs and fluctuations in lake levels lead to poor utilization of the trail. The Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee directed the Forest & Trails Division to develop alternative canoe routes, which are currently being developed in the Townline Lake area.

#### 940.1.6 Future Non-Motorized Trail Systems

The development of additional non-motorized trail systems will include careful consideration of public demand, analysis of user conflicts and potential damage to the natural resource. Trail system development should comply with the Outdoor Recreation Plan goals and be referenced in SCORP or other regional planning documents.

Non-motorized trail systems generally are not supported by statewide grant programs.

The County may require an agreement with an organized club or user group, with the ability to assist with maintenance and support of the trail and associated facilities.

Appropriate trail passes, or other user fees, may be implemented as indicated in Section 915.

### 940.2 MOTORIZED RECREATION TRAILS

The Chippewa County Forest is a multiple use forest. Motorized recreation trails can be a legitimate use of the County Forest if these trails are designed and maintained in a manner that should minimize damage and reduce user conflict. Trail use and development must be compatible and sustainable with the characteristics of the landscape. Generally, if a road in the County Forest is not gated, posted as closed or bermed, it is open for operation of a licensed motor vehicle. If open roads develop problems (erosion, littering, etc.), they may be closed by the County. It is the policy of the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee to manage motorized recreation trails on the County Forest.

#### 940.2.1 Undesignated Snowmobile Trails

No cross country use of snowmobiles is permitted. Snowmobile use is permitted only when the ground is snow covered, on all primary, secondary and temporary roads, except where posted as closed. Use in the County Forest during other times of year is not allowed. The Hickory Ridge and River Road Cross Country Ski Trails are closed to snowmobiles. Snowmobiling is not allowed on any County authorized snowmobile trails when closed to use or contrary to posted notice.



#### 940.2.2 Designated Snowmobile Trails

Designated snowmobile trails are those recognized by the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee as the official trails within the County. The Chippewa County Department of Land Conservation & Forest Management Department manages the snowmobile trail system in Chippewa County. Annual agreements outline the operation, maintenance and insurance obligations between the County and the Chippewa Valley Snowmobile Organization (CVSO). The County contracts with the CVSO, comprised of several local snowmobile clubs, for trail maintenance.

The Code of Chippewa County, Sec 16-9(k) regulates snowmobile use. A summary of rules and regulations relating to snowmobile trails is as follows:

- a. Snowmobile trails are closed during the off season to minimize summer maintenance, unless the trail is used for some other authorized purpose
- b. The County Forest Administrator, in consultation with the CVSO President, will make determinations to officially open and close snowmobile trails based on snow and maintenance conditions
- c. Snowmobile trails used for logging access during snowmobile season will be posted with signs warning users of activity.
- d. Designated snowmobile trails in the County Forest shall be kept clear of any unauthorized signs. No such signs shall be erected without the express written permission of the Chippewa County Department of Land Conservation & Forest Management or the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee.
- e. Proper use of snowmobiles shall be in accord with Wis. Stats. Ch. 350. Specific areas where snowmobiles are not to be used shall be clearly marked with signage.

Chippewa County recognizes the following categories of snowmobile trail:

#### 940.2.2.1 Trail Types

The County recognizes several different classifications of snowmobile trail:

State Funded Trails – these are state approved and funded trail miles on designated trails that are part of a statewide network of trail systems.

Snowmobile registration fees and gas tax allotments fund grants that support maintenance, rehabilitation and development of these trails. There are approximately 369 miles of funded trails in Chippewa County, with approximately 15 miles on County Forest Lands.

Local/Club Trails – these are trails that are not funded by State maintenance grants and may or may not be groomed by local clubs. These trails may not meet eligibility requirements of a funded trail and may dead end at local businesses. There are approximately 128 miles of club trails in Chippewa County.

#### 940.2.2.2 Trail Maintenance

Chippewa County contracts CVSO to perform safe and proper maintenance and grooming of the State funded snowmobile trail system. The County administers the grant funds from the State, reimbursing CVSO for trail expenses and periodically assists with mowing, grading or other trail maintenance projects as needed. The County shall inspect and monitor bridges and other infrastructure on the trail system and attempt to secure funding from grants, or other sources, to replace or rehabilitate as needed.

#### 940.2.2.3 Future Snowmobile Trails

Proposals to relocate trails or to make adjustments to the existing trail system will be encouraged where there are concerns of public safety or environmental damage. Unfunded and club trails should be evaluated for maintenance funding application.

### 940.2.3 Undesignated ATV Trails

There are no undesignated ATV trail in the Chippewa County Forest. ATV use is permitted only on designated trails and operation by holders of a special use permit for such purposes as disabled access.

### 940.2.4 Designated ATV Trails

Designated ATV Trails are those recognized by the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee as official trails within the County. These may lie on County, private, or other agency lands. Annual agreements outline the operation, maintenance and insurance obligations between the County and local clubs. The County contracts with the Chippewa Valley All-Terrain Vehicle Council (CVATVC) for trail maintenance.

There are numerous designated ATV trails managed by Chippewa County. These trails are identified in the Appendix.

#### 940.2.4.1 Trail Types

The County recognizes several different classifications of ATV trails. Maps are appended for reference.

1. Funded Winter ATV Trails – None of State funded snowmobile trails in the County Forest are also designated and funded as winter use ATV trails.
2. Funded Summer ATV Trails – These are trail systems funded for only Summer use. These trails are open from May 1 – November 15. There are approximately 23.1 miles of summer use ATV trails managed in the County Forest.
3. Funded Year Round Trails - These are trail systems funded for both winter and summer use. There are no year-round funded ATV trails.

4. Funded UTV Trails – UTV’s, or side-by-sides, can be allowed on ATV trail systems. Chippewa County allows for UTV’s on 31 miles of the trail system within the County.

5. Funded Troute/Hybrid Trails – The ATV/UTV program does not allow for full maintenance funding on ATV/UTV trails that are open to highway traffic (cars, trucks, etc.) ATV trails with this dual use that were maintained and funded prior to August 1, 2012, are still funded at 100% of the annual per mile maintenance rate. Trails funded after August 1, 2012, allow for partial funding under the following categories:

5a. County Forest Gas Tax Roads – These are gas tax roads used as a connector to trails or services and are funded at a rate determined by the full per mile funding rate, less gas tax funding rate, not to exceed 50% of the full maintenance funding rate. Chippewa County maintains 8.2 miles of County Forest Road Troutes.

5b. Hybrid Trails – These are trails designated as ATV trails, opened after August 1, 2012, that also permit highway vehicle traffic. These are funded at fifty (50%) of the annual maintenance funding rate. Chippewa County has no Hybrid/Troute trails.

5c. Club Trails – These are trails not funded under the State ATV program. In some cases, these are trails that are maintained and may be added as a funded trail at a future date. Chippewa County does not recognize any club trails.

5d. State Trails – Chippewa County has no State ATV trails.

#### 940.2.4.2 ATV Trail Maintenance

For the purpose of ATV trails, the term sustainability is intended to mean the development of a trail surface that is maintainable. It appears evident there are no circumstances where an ATV trail can be considered sustainable without intensive maintenance. Of primary importance, trail surfaces need to be conducive to periodic grading or restoration that promotes water runoff from the trail surface and eliminates the opportunity for water flow to gain velocity, causing erosion.

The CVATVC is a non-profit corporation consisting of several local ATV clubs of Chippewa County. CVATVC has an annual maintenance agreement with Chippewa County to serve as a contractor for the maintenance of the State funded trails in the County Forest.

The County shall inspect and monitor trails, bridges and other infrastructure and attempt to secure funding from grants, or other sources, to periodically replace, improve or rehabilitate trail surfaces or bridges, as needed.

#### 940.2.4.3 Future ATV Trails

The use and popularity of ATV's and UTV's increased dramatically over the period of the 2006-2020 County Forest Plan. Increased usage of trail systems proved a tremendous need for much higher levels of trail maintenance in order to manage environmental damages. It is critical that trail layout and design is done in such a way as to prevent erosion and soil loss. Trails must be developed sustainably. For the purpose of this plan, sustainability is defined as follows:

**Sustainability** – For the purpose of ATV trails, the term sustainability is intended to mean the development of a trail surface that is maintainable. It appears evident there are no circumstances where an ATV trail can be considered sustainable without intensive maintenance. Of primary importance, trail surfaces need to be conducive to periodic grading or restoration that promotes water runoff from the trail surface and eliminates the opportunity for water flow to gain velocity, causing

erosion. Trails should be built with a slight crown and appropriate ditching to allow for adequate and proper water dispersal.

To this end, the construction and development of new ATV trails are to comply with the **WCFA ATV/ORV Trail Standards.**

### 940.3 RECREATION TRAIL PERMITS

#### 940.3.1 Storm Water Discharge

In general, any trail construction or rehabilitation activities that disturb one acre or more of land will require a Storm Water Discharge Permit. There have been instances of inconsistent application of permit requirements statewide. In order to further define the County's understanding and implementation of permit requirements, the following current acceptable process will be used for determining when a permit is needed.

- The one (1) acre threshold will be determined by measuring/estimating new disturbance or disturbance of previously grassed surfaces.
- Periodic grading of impervious or non-grassed trail surfaces is not considered disturbance.
- Restoration of water filtration/diversion devices, such as sediment traps or catch basins, is considered maintenance and not disturbance.
- Reconstruction of previously grassed ditch lines as part of trail rehabilitation is considered disturbance.

#### 940.3.2 Chapter 30

Permits are required for bridges or culvert crossings of navigable waterways. These permits will either be classified as general or individual depending on specific site conditions. These permits are not required for culvert or bridge crossings of non-navigable or intermittent streams, nor are they required to install a clear span bridge over wetlands.

### 940.3.3 Wetland Fill

Permits are required at any time that fill is placed in a wetland. Permits are available to fill small wetlands for recreation trail purposes. Wetland fill must be less than 10,000 square feet and the permit does not require wetland mitigation. Clear span bridge and boardwalks placed on pilings generally do not require a wetland fill permit. Puncheon style bridges do require a permit.

## **945 RECREATION PROGRAM FUNDING AND GRANTS**

### 945.1 RECREATION AREA FUNDING

Funding for recreation areas is generally budgeted from timber sale revenues and grants. Aid for Development of Local Parks (ADLP) funding is available for facility development or enhancement but there is normally a very high level of completion for these funds.

### 945.2 RECREATION TRAIL FUNDING

#### 945.2.1 Non-Motorized Trail Systems

At this time, there is very limited access to any grant funds that will assist with non-motorized recreational trail maintenance. The County relies on timber revenue for most County Forest trails and State Trail Pass sales on the Old Abe State Trail.

#### 945.2.2 Motorized Trail Systems

There are numerous grant programs available to offset motorized trail system costs. Chippewa County utilizes the following funding sources:

1. Snowmobile Maintenance - \$300/mile
2. ATV Summer Maintenance - \$600/mile
3. ATV Winter Maintenance - \$100/mile
4. UTV Maintenance - \$100/mile
5. ATV Rehabilitation - 100% grants
6. ATV Development - 100% grants
7. TROUTE Maintenance- per mile rate (\$700/mi) minus gas tax received.
8. TROUTE Rehabilitation – 50% grants

### 945.3 CONVERSION OF EXISTING TRAIL TO AN ALTERNATIVE TRAIL USE

In the event that the development of a new trail would result in the displacement of an existing, authorized trail use, new trail development shall not be authorized unless the following conditions are met:

- A. The sponsor of the new trail demonstrates that all reasonable alternatives to displacement have been considered, including, but not limited to: land use agreements, leases, or acquisition of private lands to accommodate the proposed or displaced trail.
- B. The sponsor of the new trail agrees to provide, at no expense to the displaced trail user group, a replacement that is comparable or superior, as defined by the displaced user group. Reasonable attempts shall be made to develop the replacement trail following the existing protocol of the displaced trail user group. Use of the previously existing trail shall not be interrupted or discontinued, without agreement from the displaced trail user group, until the replacement is available.

Nothing in this subsection supersedes authorization requirements established elsewhere in this plan or other County policy.

## **950 PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE RECREATION PROGRAM**

The following are recommended changes that this plan recognizes as improvements or enhancements to the recreation program.

### 950.1 ENFORCEMENT NEEDS

Chippewa County currently budgets funds in the contracted services account to reimburse the Sheriff Department for patrol of the County Forest and recreational trails. This funding is essential to maintaining a law enforcement presence in remote areas of the County Forest.



## 950.2 MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS

Chippewa County will continue to work with local organizations and user groups encouraging the development of maintenance agreements with willing partners to provide quality recreational opportunities in the County Forest.