

MONROE 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 Monroe 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 Monroe County Outdoor Recreation Plan also guides the recreation program. This plan is revised periodically and is made part of this Plan. The Monroe County Outdoor recreation Plan includes, but is not limited to, activities on 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 Outdoor Recreation Plan, 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 on the County Forest will rest with the Committee.

910 AUTHORITY

The Monroe County Code of Ordinances and s. 28.11 Wis. Stats, authorize the Natural Resources and Extension 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.

Hyperlinks to maps of the recreational facilities managed through the Monroe County Forest program are included in Chapter 1000.

915 ENTRANCE AND USER FEES

The Natural Resources and Extension 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 similar

adjacent county and private facilities and are subject to periodic change by the Committee. Fees, where appropriate, will be utilized to assist in the maintenance of recreational facilities.

920 RECREATIONAL SERVICE AGREEMENTS

It is permissible for the Committee to contract with clubs or individuals to provide for recreational maintenance or services to the public. As part of the Plan, the County contracts for the following services:

1. Snowmobile trail grooming and maintenance

925 RECREATIONAL USE PERMITS FOR ORGANIZED EVENTS

Any event on the 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 Committee provided the use is consistent with management activities and will not cause resource damage. Appropriate levels of event liability insurance is required.

930 UNDESIGNATED RECREATIONAL USE OF THE FOREST

Undesignated 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 ordinance. The Forest Administrator and the 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. The Monroe County Code of Ordinances regulates activities relating to hunting. Refer to Chapter 1000 for a full text of the Ordinance. In general the following activities are regulated:

1. No hunting or trapping is allowed in the forest surrounding McMullen Memorial County Park. SWSE, NWSE, NESE section 5, T19N R1W, Town of Lincoln. Exceptions are made for nuisance animals.
2. Stands and blinds must be removed daily.
3. Activities must not cause damage to trees.

930.2 FISHING

All lakes and streams within the 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 Monroe County Code of Ordinances 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 are only allowed in designated areas with installed grills or fire rings.

930.4 CAMPING

Camping is only allowed at designated camp sites. McMullen Memorial County Park is the only designated campground on the Monroe County Forest.

930.5 MOTORIZED TRAVEL

The Monroe County Code of Ordinances (and road and access plan if applicable) regulates motorized uses on the County Forest. The full text of these regulations is included in Chapter 700. 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.

930.6 OTHER USES

Other uses of the County Forest are permitted provided they are not specifically addressed with the County Code of Ordinances. Mountain Biking, Horseback riding, and other non-motorized uses are currently not regulated. The County Board may, at any time, enact ordinances to protect the forest should damage begin to occur.

935 DESIGNATED RECREATION AREAS/USES

Designated recreation includes those uses for which the County provides a trail or facility. The Monroe County Forest has developed sites and areas to accommodate a high degree of public use. The Committee may prohibit other recreation activities that are not compatible with the intent of

the developed facilities.

The Committee and Forestry Department has noted a marked increase in demand for recreation facilities. Monroe County may attempt to develop additional facilities and will maintain its currently developed facilities.

935.1 CAMPGROUNDS

935.1.1 McMullen Memorial County Park

McMullen Park is located at 1704 Atlantic Road, Warrens, WI 54666. The park facilities include 71 campsites, electricity and water hookups, shower house, 3 vault toilets, playground facilities, beach, fishing pier, boat launch, fish cleaning station, dump station, firewood shed and two nature trails. The facility is fee based for camping; no fees are charged for day use.

935.2 PICNIC / DAY USE AREAS

1. Angelo Wayside: boat launch, portable toilet, picnic tables
2. McMullen Memorial County Park

935.3 SWIMMING AREAS / BEACHES

1. McMullen Memorial County Park

935.4 BOAT LANDINGS

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 24 hours is prohibited unless the boat is parked in a designated storage area and the proper permit is obtained and corresponding fees paid to the county.

935.5.1 Public Boat Access Sites Maintained by the Forestry & Parks Department.

1. Angelo Wayside
2. McMullen Memorial County Park

940 DESIGNATED RECREATION TRAILS

Designated recreation trails are those for which the County provides a designated trail and/or facility. The County only provides hiking trail systems that accommodate a fairly high degree of public use. The 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 Committee. Wherever possible, attempts will be made to avoid user conflicts. Recreational users, however, will frequently encounter forest management activities instrumental to the existence and future of the County Forest.

940.1 NON-MOTORIZED RECREATION TRAILS

The Monroe 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 on the 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 Committee to manage non-motorized recreation trails on the County Forest.

940.1.1 Hiking Trails

940.1.1.1

Kreiji Education Nature Trail at McMullen Park. This trail is a ½ mile accessible trail that travels around Castle Rock, it has a crushed granite surface with an amphitheater/walking bridge and interpretive signs along the way.

1 ½ mile hiking trail at McMullen Park. This trail branches off of the Kreiji Education Nature Trail, it meanders through the woods and wetlands with three walking bridges over the wet areas. It makes a loop through the county forest following the snowmobile trail and leads back to the park.

940.1.2 Mountain Bike/Fat Tire/Bicycle Trails

Monroe County does not have any bicycle trails on the county forest.

940.1.3 Equestrian Trails

Monroe County does not have any equestrian trails on the county forest.

940.1.4 Ski Trails

There are some abandoned cross country ski trails in section 21, Town of New Lyme. These trails are marked but haven't been maintained.

940.1.5 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 proof of 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 905.

940.2 MOTORIZED RECREATION TRAILS

940.2.1 Designated Snowmobile Trails

Designated snowmobile trails are those recognized by the Committee as the official trails within the County. The Forestry and Parks Department manages the snowmobile grant program in Monroe County. The snowmobile association, Snowmobile Trails of Monroe County, completes the trail maintenance and determines when to open/close snowmobile trails based on snow and maintenance conditions.

940.2.1.1 Trail Types

Monroe 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 300 miles of funded trails in Monroe County, with approximately 13 miles on County Forest Lands.

Unfunded Trails – are segments of trail that meet the eligibility requirements for a funded trail system but have not been included in the grant system due to restrictions on available funding. There are approximately 10 miles of unfunded trails in Monroe County, with zero 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 10 miles of club trails in Monroe County, with zero miles on County Forest lands.

940.2.1.2 Trail Maintenance

Snowmobile Trails of Monroe County grooms all of the funded and non-funded snowmobile trails.

940.2.1.3 Future Snowmobile Trails

Monroe County deems that the existing number of snowmobile trail miles is sufficient to satisfy public demand. 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.

940.2.2 Designated ATV Trails

Monroe County does not have any designated ATV Trails on the county forest and does not allow ATVs on the county forest, unless it is for a maintenance related duties. There are many town and county roads that have become ATV routes throughout the county.

940.2.2.1 Future ATV Trails

Monroe County is not considering new ATV trails on the county forest. The county forest is too fragmented, funding and staffing levels aren't sufficient to develop and maintain trails and environmental damage is a concern.

940.2.3 Designated Motorcycle Trails

Monroe County does not have any designated Motorcycle Trails on the county forest and does not allow Motorcycles on the county forest.

940.2.4 Other Designated Motor Vehicle Trails

None

940.3 RECREATION TRAIL PERMITS

940.3.1 Storm Water Discharge

In general, any trail construction or rehabilitation activities on the county forest 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 1 acre threshold will be determined by measuring/estimated 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 fee based. Aid for Development of Local Parks (ADLP) funding is available for facility development or enhancement but there is normally a very high level of competition 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 park revenue to fund non-motorized trail systems.

945.2.2 Motorized trail systems

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

1. Snowmobile Maintenance - \$300/mile

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

Enforcement needs will be evaluated periodically; if additional resources are needed, different options will be analyzed and the best solution will be implemented.

950.2 STAFF NEEDS

In the future the county will consider hiring additional full time staff to meet the growing demands of the recreation program.

950.3 CAMPGROUNDS

In the future the county may consider adding additional sites at McMullen Memorial County Park to fulfill camping needs. The county is planning to acquire an eleven acre parcel of land in the Town of Byron to provide public access to a manmade lake; this may be an opportunity for a campground.

950.4 PARKS

The county will continue to maintain and improve existing facilities and add additional facilities to promote recreation.

950.5 TRAILS

The county may consider adding additional trails and existing facilities or developing new facilities and trails.