



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

---

## Property Identifiers

Property Name: North Country Trail (NCT), Douglas County

Property Designation or Type: State and National Scenic Trail

DNR Property Code(s): 9376

Forestry Property Code(s): 1641

Property Location: Douglas County

Property Acreage: 615

Master Plan Date: December 19, 1997

Property Manager: Kevin Feind

---

## Part 1: Property Assessment

### A. ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE AND PROPERTY CONTEXT

The ecological landscape for the German, Cowett, Burger, and Van Horenweder parcels are in the **Superior Coastal Plain**. The Pete parcel at the very southern portion of Pattison State Park is located in the **Northwest Lowlands** and is described in Pattison State Park's Interim Forest Management Plan. The Prevost parcel near Solon Springs is in the **Northwest Sands**. The Superior Coastal Plain is Wisconsin's northernmost Ecological Landscape, bordered on the north by southwestern Lake Superior and strongly influencing the local climate, resulting in cooler summers, warmer winters, and greater precipitation compared to more inland locations. The major landform in this Ecological Landscape is a nearly level plain of lacustrine clays that slopes northward toward Lake Superior.

Historically the Superior Coastal Plain Ecological Landscape was almost entirely forested with a mixture of white pine, white spruce, balsam fir, paper birch, balsam poplar, quaking aspen, and northern white cedar. The present clay plain forest has been fragmented by agricultural use, and today approximately one-third of this landscape is non-forested. Aspen and birch forests occupy about 40% of the total land area, having increased in prominence over the boreal conifers.

The Northwest Sands Ecological Landscape is characterized by its sandy soils, numerous lakes, and the extensive open and overgrown barrens dominated by jack pine, northern pin oak and prairie species. There are two distinctly different landforms: flat plains or terraces and hummocky sediments. Pine-oak barrens are characterized by scattered jack pines, or less commonly red pines, mixed with scrubby Hill's and bur oaks. Interspersed within the patches of trees are openings of varying scales. Present day forest occupies roughly 62% of the land cover, with forested wetlands making up another 6% of the land cover across the landscape.



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

## B. GENERAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The North Country Trail parcels in Douglas County are comprised of five parcels:

- German Parcel – located approximately 2 miles northwest of Pattison State Park;
- Cowett Parcel – located on the Minnesota state border 8 miles southwest of Superior;
- Pete Parcel – located adjacent to and on the south side of Pattison State Park (discussed in the Pattison State Park Interim Forest Management Plan);
- Burger Parcel – located approximately 3 miles northwest of Pattison State Park; and
- Prevost Parcel – located in Solon Springs;
- Van Horenweder Parcel – located less than a mile northwest of Pattison State Park.

The landscape surrounding the parcels north of Pattison State Park is a mixture of forests, wetlands, open fields, and low density housing. Open fields are more common to the north on the Superior Coastal Plain. The extensive wetlands to the south are a mix of forested, shrub-dominated, and open types.

The soils in this area are characterized as red clay soils that are made up of reddish-brown, clayey glacial till, and lake-deposited clay and silt. The clay is derived from deep lake-bottom deposits in the Superior Basin, and gets its color from the reddish Precambrian sandstones. It is also slightly calcareous, possibly due to inputs of glacial materials from Minnesota transported via melt water sediments through the St. Louis River valley. These materials are thought to have been derived from limestone and dolomite in Manitoba and transported to Minnesota by the St. Louis Lobe of the glacier. The soils are moderately well drained and clayey, with a clay loam surface, very slow permeability, and very high available water capacity. Soil drainage classes range from well-drained to somewhat poorly drained. Surface textures are generally clay to silt loam; permeability ranges from very slow to moderately slow and available water capacity ranges from moderate to very high.

The fine textures and slow permeability of these soils give them many of the functional characteristics of wetland soils, even when they occur on uplands. Water moves out of them very slowly, and surface ponding from runoff can be common in basins and lower-lying areas. Vegetation communities on these soils typically contain species characteristics of wetlands, including northern white-cedar, black ash and speckled alder.

Five parcels are in the Lake Superior Basin and only the Prevost parcel is in the Mississippi River Basin. Van Horenweder and German are primarily drained by the Black River. Cowett is drained by Clear Creek and Pokegama River. Burger is drained by the Nemadji River. Prevost is near the banks of Upper St. Croix Lake.

## C. CURRENT FOREST TYPES, SIZE CLASSES, AND SUCCESSIONAL STAGES

There are six separate North Country Trail parcels. The Pete parcel, adjacent to Pattison State Park, was described earlier in the park's Interim Forest Management Plan. The Van Horenweder parcel was recently acquired and forestry data has not yet been collected. The summary below combines forest information from four remaining North Country Trail parcels in Douglas County. The total area across these four parcels is 547 acres.

- **Aspen:** 397 acres (69% of total acreage). Stands are mature to over mature. Dominant trees are aspen, balsam fir, and white spruce.
- **Oak:** 34 acres (6% of total acreage). Stands are classified as hardwood poles. Dominant species include red oak, aspen and red maple.



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

- **Swamp hardwoods:** 15 acres (3% of total acreage). Stands are classified as hardwood poles. Dominant trees include black ash and white spruce.
- **White spruce:** 14 acres (2% of total acreage). Stand is softwood poles. Dominant trees include white spruce, swamp hardwoods, and balsam fir.
- **White pine:** 14 acres (2% of total acreage). Stands are classified as sapling to large sawlogs. Dominant species include white pine, aspen, red maple and oak.
- **Red maple:** 3 acres (<1% of total acreage). Stand is classified as hardwood poles. Dominant species are red maple and white birch.
- **Red pine:** 1 acres (<1% of total acreage). Stand is classified as small to large sawlogs. Dominant species are red pine and oak

## D. NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY – ENDANGERED, THREATENED, and SPECIAL CONCERN SPECIES, SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED

Six special concern and one threatened birds, one threatened and one special concern reptile, and three good quality natural communities have been documented.

## E. WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREAS (COA)

Three of the four North Country Trail parcels are in COA as identified in the [2005 Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan \(WWAP\)](#). Two are in the Pokegama Nemadji Wetlands and one is in the Douglas and Bayfield County Barrens. Several natural communities documented in the trail parcels are considered to be high priority or important natural community types for either the Superior Coastal Plain or the Northwest Sands ecological landscapes. These include ephemeral ponds, mesic floodplain terrace, and northern dry mesic forest.

## F. SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL OR ARCHEOLOGICAL FEATURES

According to Wisconsin Historical Society records there are archaeological sites associated with the North Country Trail parcel in Solon Springs.

## G. INVASIVE SPECIES

There are no known invasive species on the parcels. It is likely that buckthorn and other common local invasive species exist on the parcels.

## H. EXISTING STATE NATURAL AREAS (SNA) DESIGNATIONS/NATURAL COMMUNITY TYPES LIMITED IN THE LANDSCAPE

There are no State Natural Areas included with any of the North Country Trail parcels.

## I. PRIMARY PUBLIC RECREATION USES

The North Country National Scenic Trail passes through these parcels. The Saunders State Trail, a snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle trail, cuts through the westernmost parcel.

## J. BIOTIC INVENTORY STATUS

## K. DEFERRAL/CONSULTATION AREA DESIGNATIONS



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

---

## Part 2: Future Management - IFMP components

### Primary Forest Management Objectives

Forest management activities involving timber cutting will be undertaken to ensure a sustainable forest resource for each of the parcels. Timber harvests will include a 75-foot buffer between harvest activities and the developed North Country Trail.

Vegetative management practices are applicable to the extent they can be used as a means to promote wildlife habitat maintenance/modification, aesthetic management, and forest perpetuation as desired.

The grasslands and brush areas will be maintained to maximize vegetation diversity within the property.

The objectives for the Van Horenweder parcel have not been finalized.

### Property Prescriptions

**All Stands:** The Wildlife Action Plan describes Priority Conservation Actions that make effective use of limited resources and address multiple species with each action. All proposed forestry prescriptions should reference Priority Conservation Actions, Wildlife Action Plan priorities, property objectives and be based on individual stand level needs.

**Aspen:** to regenerate aspen, clear cut with reserves.

## Summary of Public Involvement and Comments Received

### Maps (Optional)

- a. Location Map
  - b. Forest Cover Type Maps (Pete in Pattison SP Plan, Van Horenweder not available)
    - i. German
    - ii. Cowett
    - iii. Burger
    - iv. Prevost
-



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

**PREPARED BY:**

Kevin Feind

03/23/15

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ranger

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Area Program Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**REVIEWED BY:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Forester

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

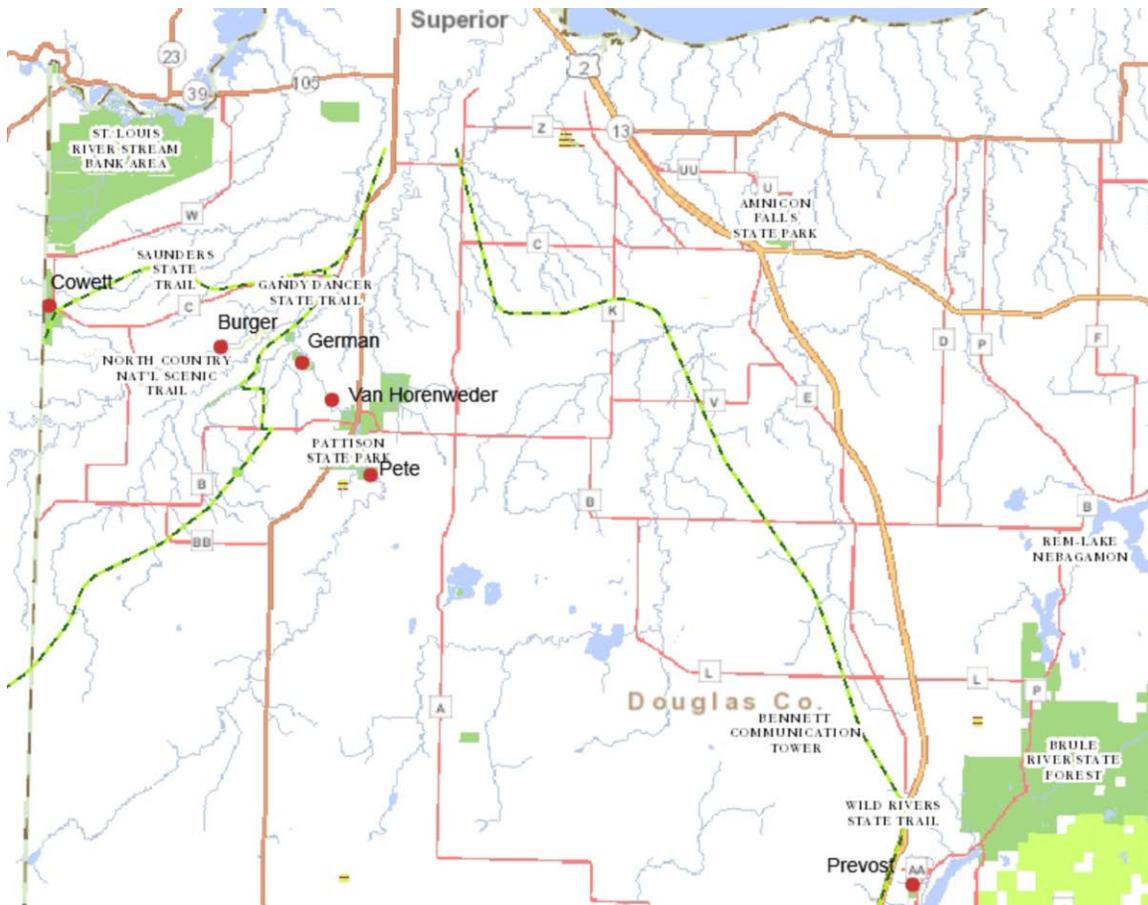
\_\_\_\_\_  
District Ecologist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

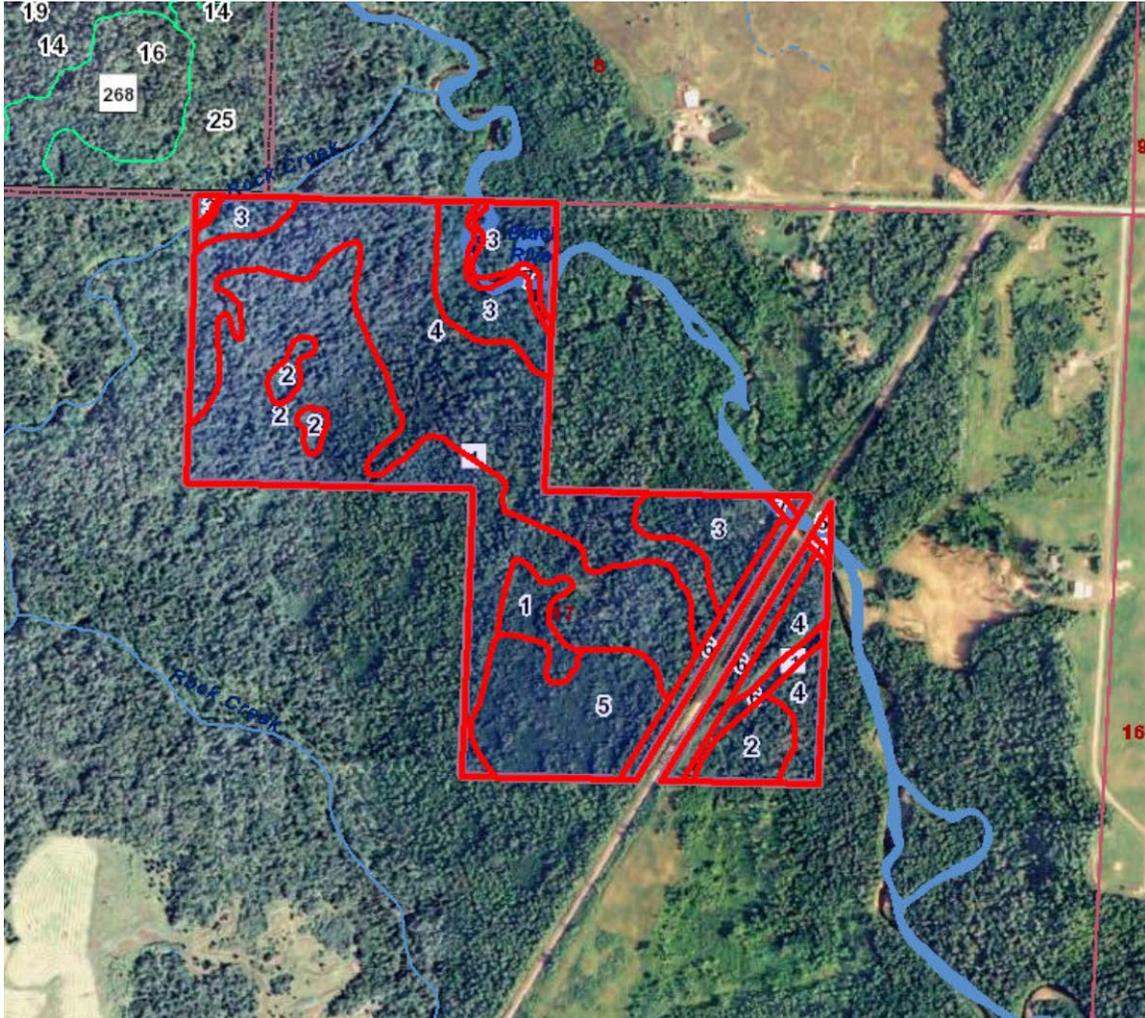
Location Map of North Country Trail Parcels





# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

## German Parcel Forest Cover Map

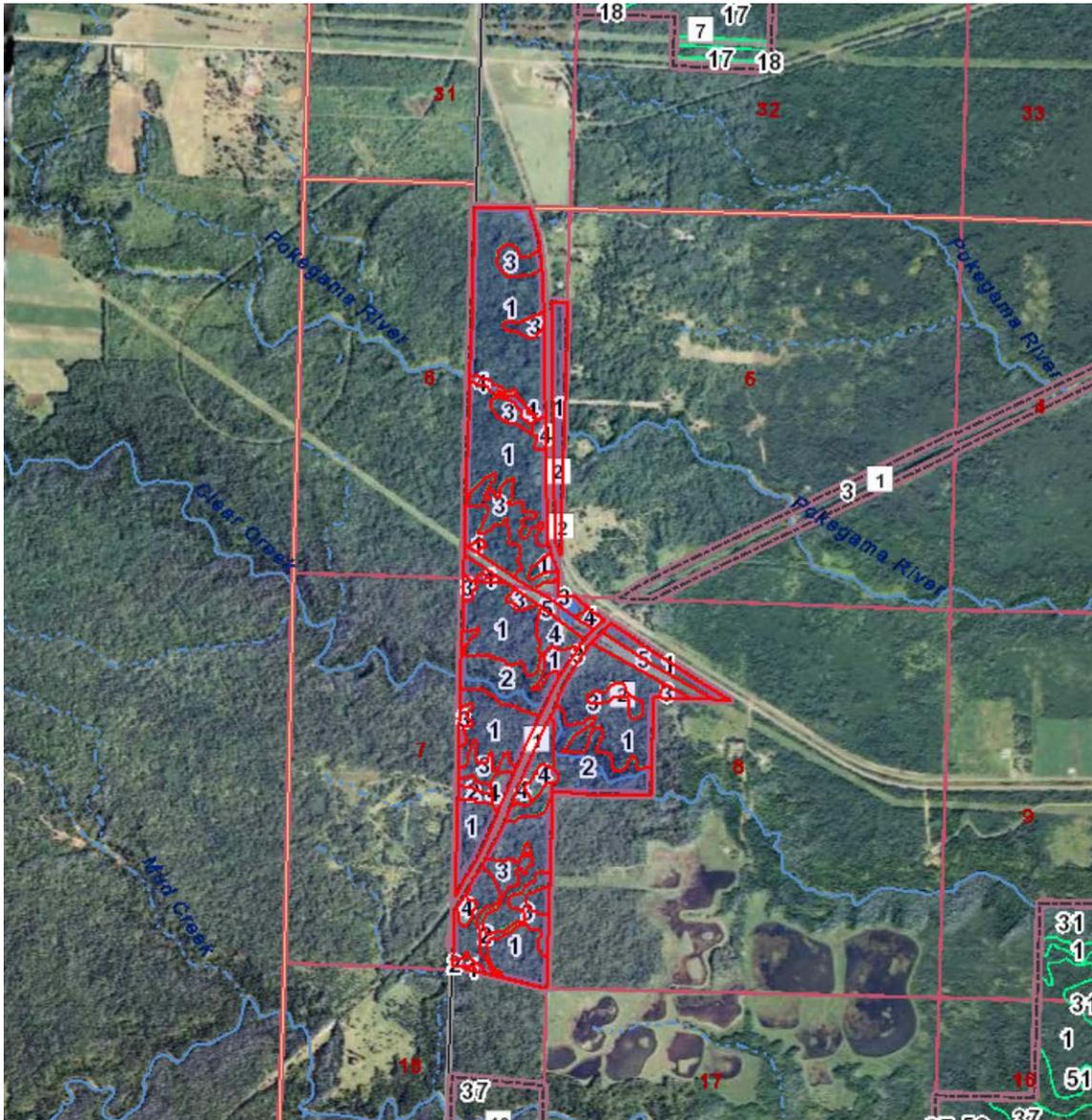


- Stand 1: White spruce with balsam fir
- Stand 2: Aspen with balsam fir
- Stand 3: White spruce with swamp hardwoods
- Stand 4: Aspen with balsam fir
- Stand 5: Lowland alder brush



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

## Cowett Parcel Forest Cover Map

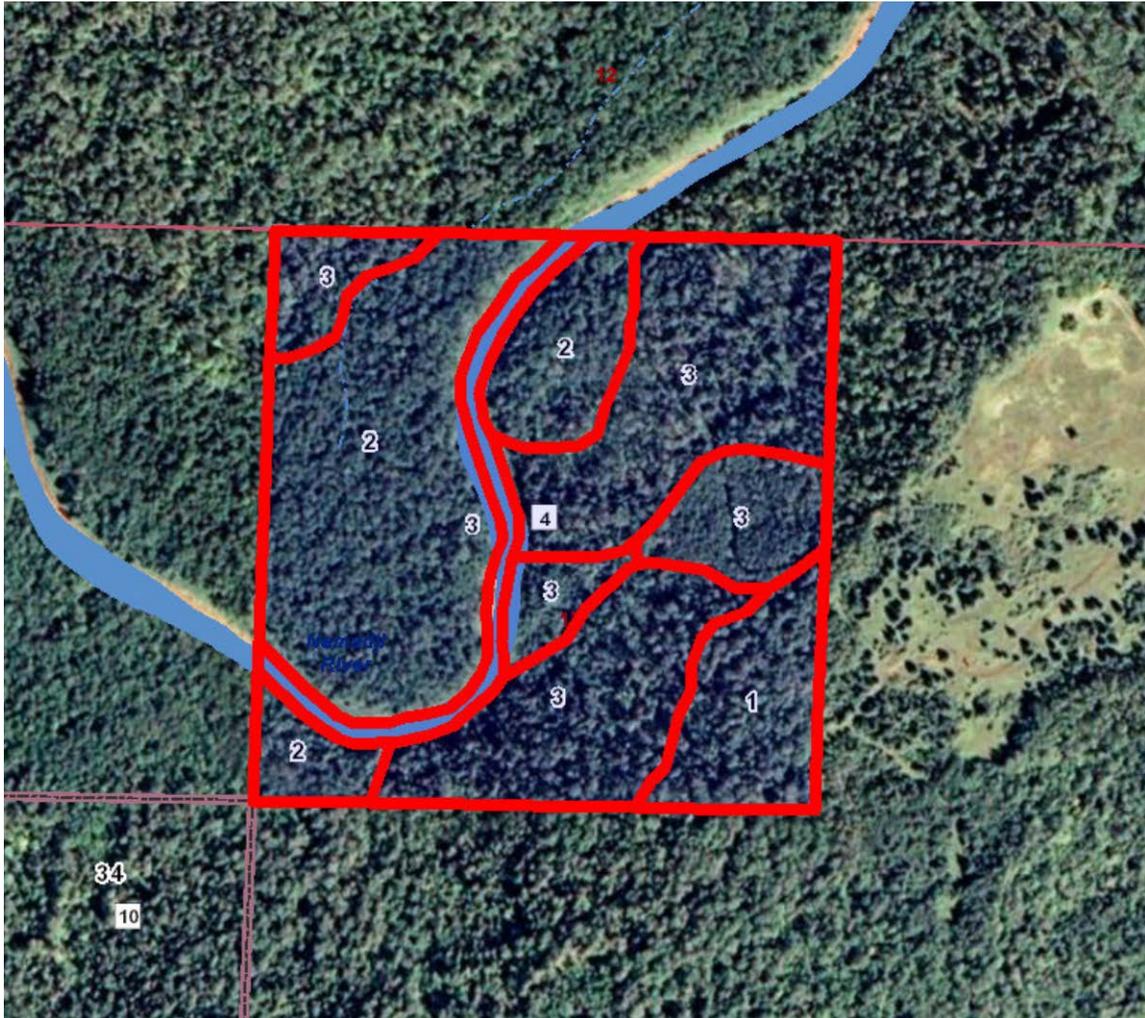


- Stand 1: Aspen
- Stand 2: Aspen with white spruce
- Stand 3: Lowland alder brush
- Stand 4: Open, non-forested
- Stand 5: Trail, pipeline right-of-way
- Stand 6: Aspen



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

## Burger Parcel Forest Cover Map



- Stand 1: Aspen with balsam fir
- Stand 2: Swamp hardwoods with white spruce
- Stand 3: Aspen with balsam fir



# North Country Trail – Douglas County Interim Forest Management Plan

## Prevost Parcel Forest Cover Map



- Stand 1: White pine with oak
- Stand 2: Red pine with oak
- Stand 3: Oak with aspen
- Stand 4: Red maple with white birch