



# Interim Forest Management Plan

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## Property Identifiers

### Property Name and Designation (multiple small properties can be grouped):

Statewide Public Access (Boat Landings), Whalen Creek FA, Bean Brook FA, Minong Ranger Station, Flat Creek WA, Rem – Spooner Lake (Crystal Brook FA), Rem – Namekagon River, Sawyer Creek FA, Gov. Tommy G. Thompson Hatchery, McKenzie Creek FA, Beaver Brook WA, Statewide Spring Ponds (Tozer Springs), Statewide HA (Shell Lake HA), Lampson Tower Site, Rem – Bear Lake

**County:** Washburn

### Property Acreage:

Statewide Public Access (Boat Landings): 31, Whalen Creek FA: 184, Bean Brook FA: 1795.25, Minong Ranger Station: 13, Flat Creek WA: 373, Rem – Spooner Lake (Crystal Brook FA): 65, Rem – Namekagon River: 171, Sawyer Creek FA: 744.49, Gov. Tommy G. Thompson Hatchery: 103, McKenzie Creek FA: 200, Beaver Brook WA: 1965, Statewide Spring Ponds (Tozer Springs): 31, Statewide HA (Shell Lake HA): 65, Lampson Tower Site: 7, Rem – Bear Lake: 262

### Forestry Property Code(s):

Statewide Public Access (Boat Landings): 6601, Whalen Creek FA: 6602, Bean Brook FA: 6603, Minong Ranger Station: 6605, Flat Creek WA: 6606, Rem – Spooner Lake (Crystal Brook FA): 6607, Rem – Namekagon River: 6608, Sawyer Creek FA: 6609, Gov. Tommy G. Thompson Hatchery: 6610, McKenzie Creek FA: 6611, Beaver Brook WA: 6612, Statewide Spring Ponds (Tozer Springs): 6613, Statewide HA (Shell Lake HA): 6614, Lampson Tower Site: 6615, Rem – Bear Lake: 6660

### Master Plan Date:

Bean Brook FA: 1986, Sawyer Creek FA: 1981, McKenzie Creek FA: 1986, Beaver Brook WA: 1986

## Part 1: Property Assessment

### General Property Description

- **Landscape and regional context**

The Washburn County Wildlife Areas and Fishery Areas are found within 3 Ecological Landscapes: 1. Northwest Sands 2. Forest Transition 3. North Central Forest.

The NW Sands are characterized by dry, sandy upland forests with numerous lakes, ponds and both forested and unforested wetlands intermixed. There is also a significant component of agricultural lands in some parts of the local landscape. Several Land Type Associations are represented here, including Hayward Plains (212Ka13), Spooner Plains (212Ka03), Danbury-Trego Plains (212Ka16) and Webb Lake Collapsed Barrens (212Ka05). Class I trout stream segments are found at several properties. Both the Yellow and Namekagon River systems are located within this part of the Ecological Landscape.

In Southern Washburn County, the Forest Transition is a mix of forested uplands and private agricultural lands. Scattered wetlands and ponds, along with several large lakes occur in this part of the Ecological Landscape. The only Land Type Association here is the Late St. Croix Moraines (212Qa01). Class I and Class II stream segments occur at both Sawyer Creek FA and Beaver Brook WA. These streams make up a portion of the Yellow River watershed, which ultimately drains to the St. Croix River.

Portions of the McKenzie Creek and Whalen Creek Fishery Areas occur within the North Central Forest Ecological Landscape, where upland forest dominates the landscape, and agriculture is



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less prevalent. The Land Type Association here is the Hayward Moraines (212Xf04). Class I trout streams are found at both properties, which are part of the Namekagon River watershed.

These properties are not part of any Terrestrial Conservation Opportunity Areas.

A portion of Sawyer Creek FA is adjacent to the Yellow River Aquatic COA, which contains a diverse assemblage of vertebrate Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

A portion of Bear Lake REM is associated with the Bear Lake Sedge Meadow Important Bird Area, which is designated due to its grassland bird habitat.

- **History of land use and past management**

**Beaver Brook Wildlife Area** is a 1,964 acre parcel with purchases beginning in 1951 by the Wisconsin Conservation Commission. The wildlife area contains a class A trout stream fed by 10 spring ponds. Beaver Brook is located in south central Washburn County in sections 4, 5, 8, 9, 15 and 16 in T38N-R12W. The property is open to public use activities which include: hiking, cross-country skiing, fishing, hunting, trapping, birding etc.

Past management activities have included the construction of osprey nesting platforms, timber harvest, prescribed burns, invasive species control, instream trout habitat improvement and surveys, beaver population control and dam removal.

**Flat Creek Wildlife Area** is a 373 acre parcel that's final purchase was in 1953. Flat Creek is located on the border of Washburn and Sawyer counties in section 13 of T40N- R10W of Washburn County and section 18 of T40N-R9W of Sawyer County. The property is open to public use activities including: hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, bird watching, etc.

Past Management activities have included timber harvests and wildlife habitat improvement.

**Bean Brook Fishery Area** is a 2,359 acre parcel that was purchased in 1962 by the Wisconsin Conservation Department and became a fishery area which contains 4 streams and 2 natural spring ponds. It is located in the west central part of Washburn County in sections 14, 21, 22, 23, 27 and 28 in T. 40N, R. 10W. The management plan was approved in 1986 with the goal "To protect Bean Brook, its tributaries and springs as trout habitat while providing a public fishing and hunting area and allowing other compatible recreational and educational uses." 7 off road parking areas will provide access to the fishery area. Fishing in the major public use for Bean Brook Fishery Area but it will also provide public hunting, trapping, hiking, etc.

Past management activities have included stream dredging to improve water temperature, timber harvest, beaver dam removal and beaver population control, periodic fish surveys and signing of the boundary.

**McKenzie Creek Fishery Area** is a 200 acre parcel that was created in 1962. It is located in the Northwest part of Washburn county in T. 41N, R. 12W in section 33. McKenzie Creek has on trout stream that runs through it that is inhabited by brook trout. The trout stream does flow out of McKenzie Creek Fishery Area on onto private land where there is an easement between the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the private land owners to allow public access for the entire length of the stream. The McKenzie Creek master plan was approved in 1986 with the goal of "To protect and manage McKenzie Creek,, its tributaries and springs as trout habitat while providing a public fishing and hunting area and allowing other compatible recreational and educational uses." There is one off road parking area that allows public access to McKenzie Creek for hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and other allowed public recreational uses.

Past management activities have included: spring pond dredging for improved trout habitat, stream bank brushing, timber harvest, periodic stream surveys, beaver dam and population control and signing of the boundary and the parking area.

**Sawyer Creek Fishery Area** is a 722 acre parcel that was purchased in March of 1959 by the Wisconsin Conservation Commission as a Fishery Area that had an approved total goal of 1020 acres. Sawyer Creek is located in Southwest Washburn County in T.38N, R.13W in sections 10, 11, 14, 15, and 23. The master plan was approved in 1981 with the goal of "To protect and manage Sawyer Creek, its tributaries and springs as trout habitat while providing a public fishing and hunting area and allowing other compatible recreational and educational uses." There are 6



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off road parking areas that allow the public access to the fishery area to engage in multiple activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, trapping, etc. Past management activities have included fish habitat protection and development, beaver control, stream bank improvement, in-stream habitat improvement, spring pond dredging, fish surveys and stocking, timber harvest and sign posting of the boundary.

## Site Specifics

- **Current forest types, size classes and successional stages**

<b>Recon Acres</b>	<b>5,820</b>
<b>Forested Acres</b>	<b>4,071</b> Forested acres include acreage from stands that have a true forest type for their primary forest type.
<b>Scheduled for Management</b>	3,825
<b>Not Scheduled for Management</b>	246 Acreage not scheduled for management includes acreage from stands with a prefix of: R - Designated Wild River Zone Y - Designated Wilderness Area
<b>Non-Forested Acres</b>	<b>1,749</b> Z - Other Stand Omitted from Management

Forest Type Acreage	Forest Type	Forest Type Description			Percent of Forested Acres	Percent of Recon Acres
			Stands	Acres		
	A	ASPEN	80	1,794	44 %	31 %
	BW	WHITE BIRCH	1	10	0 %	0 %
	C	WHITE CEDAR	1	4	0 %	0 %
	FB	BALSAM FIR	2	31	1 %	1 %
	NH	NORTHERN HARDWOODS	10	160	4 %	3 %
	O	OAK	23	579	14 %	10 %
	OX	SCRUB OAK	3	25	1 %	0 %
	PJ	JACK PINE	13	95	2 %	2 %
	PR	RED PINE	12	143	4 %	2 %
	PW	WHITE PINE	14	107	3 %	2 %
	SB	BLACK SPRUCE	2	15	0 %	0 %
	SC	SWAMP CONIFER-*OLD CODE, RECODE	2	93	2 %	2 %
	SH	SWAMP HARDWOODS	23	517	13 %	9 %



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SW	WHITE SPRUCE	3	33	1 %	1 %
T	TAMARACK	20	465	11 %	8 %
<b>Total:</b>		<b>209</b>	<b>4,071</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>71 %</b>

Non-Forest Acreage	Forest Type	Forest Type Description	Stands	Acres	Percent of Non-Forested Acres	Percent of Recon Acres
	G	UPLAND GRASS	4	64	4%	1%
	GG	TRUE GRASSES	3	36	2%	1%
	GLS	LOW - GROWING SHRUBS	1	16	1%	0%
	I	DEVELOPED USE	3	103	6%	2%
	K	MARSH	5	349	20%	6%
	KEV	EMERGENT VEGETATION	3	127	7%	2%
	KG	LOWLAND GRASS	5	46	3%	1%
	L	WATER	3	28	2%	0%
	LB	LOWLAND BRUSH	3	136	8%	2%
	LBA	LOWLAND BRUSH - ALDER	4	718	41%	12%
	LM	MINOR LAKE	6	67	4%	1%
	LMS	MINOR STREAM	5	36	2%	1%
	ROW	RIGHT OF WAY	1	6	0%	0%
	UB	UPLAND BRUSH	3	17	1%	0%
	<b>Total:</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>29%</b>

**Summary:**

- These properties are heavily forested (70%) in species common to northern forests of Wisconsin.
- Deciduous tree species dominate.
- Aspen is by far the most common timber type.

- **State Natural Area designations**

There are no State Natural Areas on any of these properties.

- **High Value Conservation Forests (HCVF) or other resources/natural community types limited in the landscape**

Natural-origin pine stands, especially those in older age-classes, are not common in the local landscape. There are a few examples at Beaver Brook WA.

Based on the current draft criteria for defining High Conservation Value Forest (Forest Stewardship Council 2009), the best opportunities for HCVF on these properties are the Primary Sites as well as high quality natural communities and rare species habitat areas that are outside the Primary Sites. See Publication: PUB-ER-842-2011 for more details on the Primary Sites at Sawyer Creek and Bear Lake Remnant.

- **Biotic Inventory status**

A Rapid Ecological Assessment is available for the Fishery Areas of Southern Washburn, Polk and Barron Counties, which includes both Sawyer Creek and Bear Lake Remnant. Publication: PUB-ER-842-2011



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- **Deferral/consultation area designations**

There are 2 consultation sites at Sawyer Creek and 1 at Bear Lake Remnant [MRJ1]. See the Rapid Ecological Assessment for more details about the location of these sites. Publication: PUB-ER-842-2011

- **Rare species**

Rare bird species are known to breed on at least 4 of the properties within this grouping. Rare reptiles occur on several of these properties.

An NHI screening will be conducted prior to all future management activities.

- **Invasive species**

Invasive species that have been identified on the properties within the plan include; Eurasian Buckthorn, Honeysuckle, Black Locust, Spotted Knapweed, Canada Thistle, Leafy Spurge, Purple Loosestrife and Common Tansy. Continued monitoring will be used to observe existing populations and identify new populations of invasive species. Management of invasive species will focus on the use of prescribed fire, chemical application, biological control and mechanical means as methods to control the spread and establishment of invasive species.

- **Soils:**

Statewide Public Access, Ernie Swift Camp: Grayling Sand, Whalen Creek FA, Bean Brook FA, Minong Station, Flat Creek WA, Statewide Spring Ponds: Seelyeville and Markey Soils

Spooner Lake Rem., Gov. Tommy G. Thompson Hatchery: Grayalm-Menahga Complex

Namekagen River Rem., Sawyer Creek FA, Shell Lake Rearing Station: Loamy Sand

McKenzie Creek FA, Lampson Pines and Totogatic Hemlock: Lupton, Cathro and Tawas Soils

Beaver Brook WA, Bear Lake Rem.: Seelyeville and Cathro Soils, Lampson Tower Site: Keweenaw-Pence Complex

## Cultural and Recreational Considerations

- Known archaeological sites have been identified on the Beaver Brook Wildlife Area, Sawyer Creek Fishery Area, Bear Lake Remnant, Shell Lake Habitat Area, Crystal Brook Fishery Area, Governor Tommy Thompson State Fish Hatchery and the Minong Ranger Station property. Properties that contain or are adjacent to historical structures include Beaver Brook Wildlife Area, Governor Tommy Thompson State Fish Hatchery and the Minong Ranger Station property. Property managers will refer to Manual Code 1810.1 for guidance upon proposal of timber sales within the borders of all properties contained within the plan.



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## Part 2: IFMP Components (1-2 pages maximum)

### Management Objectives (Outline primary forest management objectives):

Sustainably manage the forest resource to:

- Manage forest resources to maximize native wildlife species habitat by promoting aspen, white oak, northern pin oak, red oak, jack pine and other northern hardwood and coniferous species.
- Use the Ecological Landscapes: Northwest Sands, North Central Forest and Forest Transition to guide forest management in the associated portions of the county.
- Use Rapid Ecological Assessment for the Fishery Areas within the Southern Washburn, Polk, and Barron County Planning Group as a guide to managing for wildlife.
- Take advantage of forest stands that would allow for maintaining and prolonging the oak forest timber to survive to 81-100 years and 101 years plus.
- Maintain the extent and quality of swamp hardwood, alder, bottomland hardwood stands and other wetland types.
- Maintain and/or create open fields and grasslands by controlling woody encroachment with mowing, prescribed burning or other habitat maintenance means.
- Convert coniferous plantations to native forest types or non-forest types. Forest restoration will be done with native species and mimic natural structure associated with the proper ecological landscape.
- Control exotic species and prevent and/or reduce spread of exotics.
- Protect water quality, air quality, and undeveloped lake and river frontage.
- Maintain the current level of aspen acres. Disperse harvesting to create disturbance over the range of properties, and to create better age class distribution.
- Place a strong emphasis on red oak and consider it a critical resource to maintain. Red oak regeneration considerations may include scarification, prescribed burning, and shelterwood.
- On the richer sites, northern hardwood may provide too much competition to effectively regenerate oak. It may be advisable to allow these stands to gradually convert to a larger component of northern hardwood. Emphasis should be placed on retaining as large a component of oak as possible.
- Red and white pine. Explore opportunities to naturally regenerate these stands over time using a variety of techniques that may include scarification or burning. Consider multi-cohort management.
- Swamp conifer and hardwood types should continue to be managed through timber harvesting when the need and opportunity arise. Many of these, however, are associated with sensitive areas such as springs, ponds and streams, and thus should be considered as non-harvest locations.



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- Manage to protect special concern, threatened and endangered species and protect/provide habitat for a variety of game and non-game wildlife species, including aquatic species. The Wildlife Action Plan and NHI will be used as references for management.

**Property Prescriptions** (Identify specific and pertinent prescriptions by area or forest type, including passive management areas, extended rotation, and other information that will help achieve the objectives):

The WI DNR Silvicultural Handbook shall be utilized to manage all forest cover types.

- Aspen: Regenerate by clear-cutting (even-aged management). The rotation age for aspen varies based on site conditions, but it is generally 50-60 years. On some of the mesic sites an extended rotation of up to 70 years could be implemented. Large aspen stands should be divided and harvested years apart to increase age-class diversity. As appropriate, snags, high quality cavity, mast and conifer trees along with green tree retention areas will not be harvested. Green tree retention should be concentrated around and between ephemeral ponds, wherever possible.
- Oak: Maintain stands through even age management techniques and natural regeneration harvest systems appropriate for the stand and site conditions.
  - Site preparation to include soil scarification, herbicide treatments and prescribed burns may be necessary to establish regeneration.
  - Artificial regeneration from seed or seedlings may be necessary to establish reproduction prior to or after timber harvests when natural regeneration is not adequate.
  - Typically black oak and northern pin oak will undergo no intermediate thinning operations during the rotation length however true red oak may be thinned on a periodic basis to increase volume and value.
  - The Oak Chapter of the WI DNR Silviculture Handbook indicates the anticipated rotation lengths for oak. Site specifics will dictate the actual rotation length for individual stands however 20% of the oak cover type will be managed into extended rotation in order to establish snags and den trees for critical wildlife habitat
- Jack Pine: Maintain stands through even age management techniques and natural regeneration harvest systems appropriate for the stand and site conditions.
  - Site preparation to include soil scarification, herbicide treatments and prescribed burns may be necessary to establish regeneration.
  - Artificial regeneration from seed or seedlings may be necessary to establish reproduction prior to or after timber harvests when natural regeneration is not adequate.
- Selection of the most appropriate silvicultural system for managing swamp hardwood and bottomland hardwood stands will be site specific. Based on the proximity of these stands to waterways and wetlands, silvicultural management requires consultation between the wildlife/fishery manager and the forester. Riparian zone management will incorporate relevant

BMP's and shall implement measures appropriate to protect the scenic and aesthetic qualities of woodlands bordering waterways. Special management considerations include avoiding the introduction of reed canary grass into these stands and management to minimize the potential impacts associated with Emerald Ash Borer.



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- Apply prescribed burns to grasslands, pine/oak barrens and to oak or jack pine stands to select against fire intolerant forest species. Some upland grass areas may be allowed to convert to forests either through natural succession or by artificial planting.
- Where opportunities exist, manage for extended rotation of natural-origin white and red pine stands.
- Use BMP's for Invasive Species to help limit the introduction and spread of invasive species when conducting timber sales.
- Use BMP's for water quality when conducting timber sales.
- Endangered Resources Species Guidance documents will be consulted (ERCOMMON\Species\_Guidance\Species\_Docs) and the management guidance and avoidance sections will be used to determine how and if timber management can occur.

Forest Type	15 Year Total (acres)	15 Year Average (acres)	Forest Type Description
A	773	52	ASPEN
C	4	0	WHITE CEDAR
FB	15	1	BALSAM FIR
NH	151	10	NORTHERN HARDWOODS
O	700	47	OAK
PJ	35	2	JACK PINE
PR	146	10	RED PINE
PW	97	6	WHITE PINE
SB	1	0	BLACK SPRUCE
SC	90	6	SWAMP CONIFER
SH	367	24	SWAMP HARDWOODS
SW	26	2	WHITE SPRUCE
T	410	27	TAMARACK

Total: 2815 187



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**Approvals:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Regional Ecologist

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Forester

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Property Manager

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Area/Team Supervisor