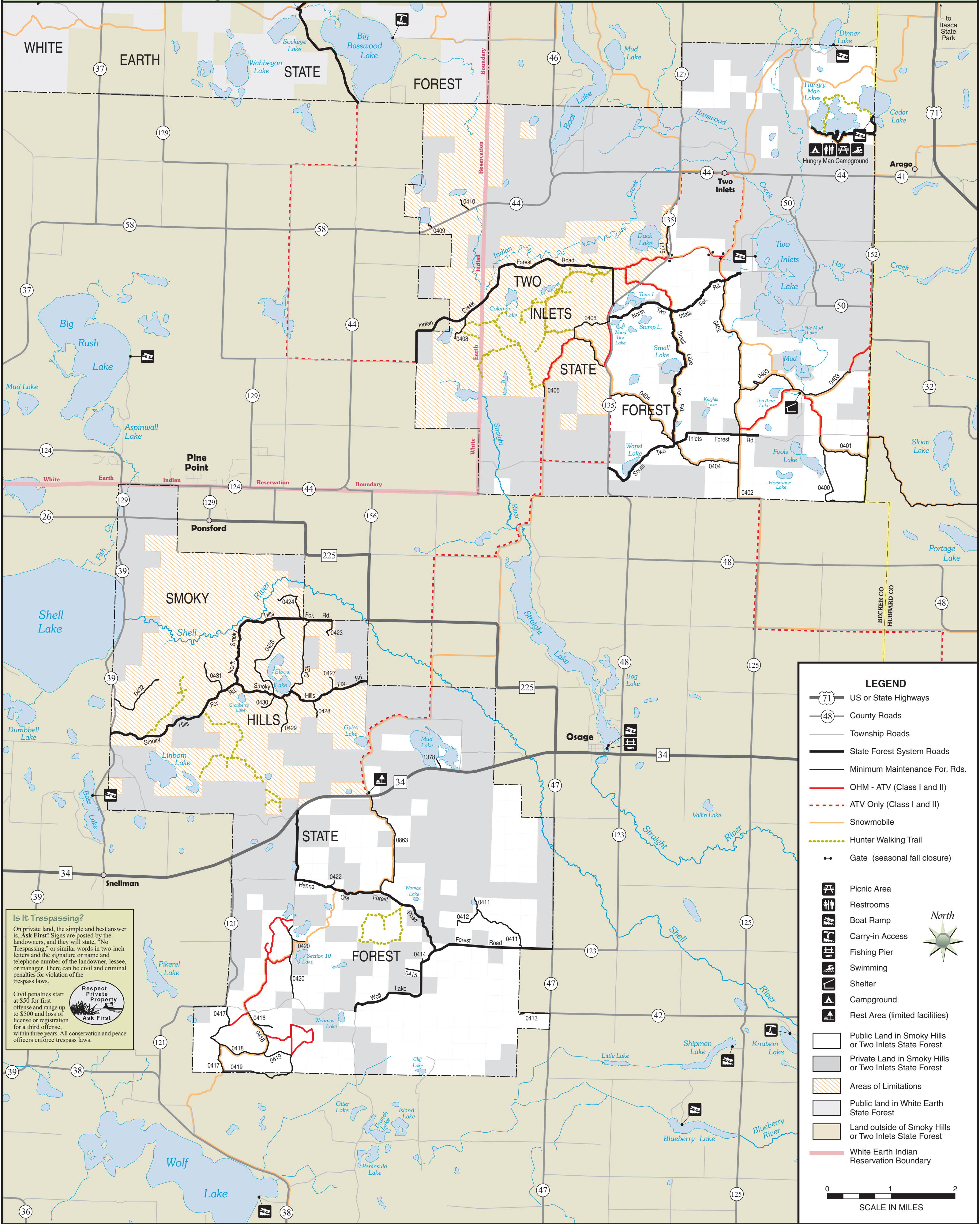


Smoky Hills and Two Inlets State Forests



Is It Trespassing?
 On private land, the simple and best answer is, **Ask First!** Signs are posted by the landowners, and they will state, "No Trespassing," or similar words in two-inch letters and the signature or name and telephone number of the landowner, lessee, or manager. There can be civil and criminal penalties for violation of the trespass laws.

Civil penalties start at \$50 for first offense and range up to \$500 and loss of license or registration for a third offense, within three years. All conservation and peace officers enforce trespass laws.

Respect Private Property
 Ask First

LEGEND

- US or State Highways
- County Roads
- Township Roads
- State Forest System Roads
- Minimum Maintenance For. Rds.
- OHM - ATV (Class I and II)
- ATV Only (Class I and II)
- Snowmobile
- Hunter Walking Trail
- Gate (seasonal fall closure)
- Picnic Area
- Restrooms
- Boat Ramp
- Carry-in Access
- Fishing Pier
- Swimming
- Shelter
- Campground
- Rest Area (limited facilities)
- Public Land in Smoky Hills or Two Inlets State Forest
- Private Land in Smoky Hills or Two Inlets State Forest
- Areas of Limitations
- Public land in White Earth State Forest
- Land outside of Smoky Hills or Two Inlets State Forest
- White Earth Indian Reservation Boundary

SCALE IN MILES
 0 1 2



Smoky Hills and Two Inlets State Forests



Area map, trail information, and recreation guide

Smoky Hills and Two Inlets State Forests Highlights

The Smoky Hills State Forest gets its name from the hazy gray hue said to arise from the abundant red pines growing on the hilly terrain. Interspersed with wetlands, rivers, and lakes, the forest is punctuated by the Smoky Hills fire tower (c. 1926) in the northeastern part. Northeast of Smoky Hills, the nearby Two Inlets State Forest is named after Two Inlets Lake. This state forest features three boat launches, a picnic area, and Hungry Man Campground on Hungry Man Lake.

Trails

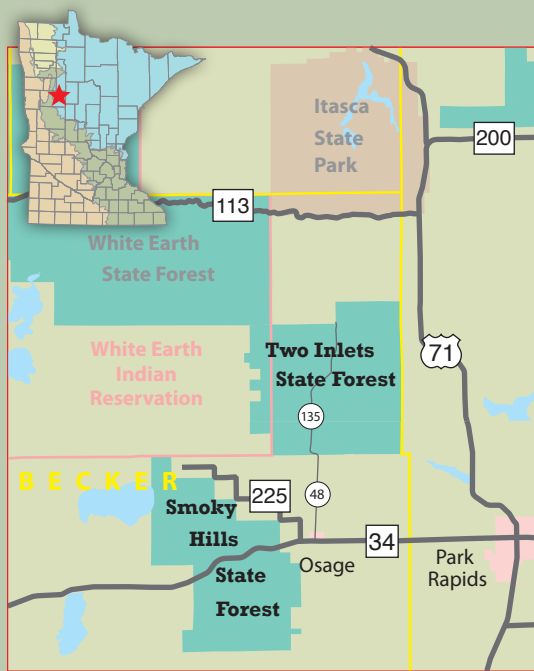
Smoky Hills	Two Inlets
Hiking	Hiking
Hunter Walking Trails	Hunter Walking Trails
Class I ATV	Class I ATV
Class II ATV	Class II ATV
Snowmobile	Snowmobile

Features

The Smoky Hills State Forest is bisected by State Highway 34 (Lake Country Scenic Byway). In the middle of the forest on Highway 34 you'll find a Department of Transportation wayside rest, which has one toilet. The Two Inlets State Forest has snowmobile and ATV trails, along with the Hungry Man Campground and Day-Use Area. Located on Hungry Man Lake, this facility has 14 campsites, toilet, drinking water, picnic tables, a boat ramp, and fishing and swimming opportunities.

Other Destinations

- Itasca State Park
- White Earth State Forest
- Paul Bunyan State Forest
- Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge
- White Earth Indian Reservation
- Greenwater Lake Scientific and Natural Area



Smoky Hills State Forest: 25,278 acres (14,909 state land) Established in 1935	Two Inlets State Forest: 28,051 acres (13,850 state land) Established in 1963
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Location

Smoky Hills State Forest is located in east central Becker County, and is best accessed along State Hwy 34. Two Inlets State Forest is located in northeastern Becker County and is best accessed using County Rd 48/135 from Osage. The western portion of Two Inlets State Forest lies within the borders of the White Earth Indian Reservation.

Natural History of the Smoky Hills and Two Inlets State Forests

The natural history and features of the Smoky Hills/Two Inlets state forests make these areas excellent for a variety of recreational opportunities such as snowmobiling, ATV riding, camping, hiking, hunting, and trapping. Two fire towers once existed in Smoky Hills forest: the Smoky Hills fire tower (built by early DNR forester Don Wilson in 1926), which still stands in the northeast part (now closed to the public); and the Wolf Lake fire tower (1929-1999) in the southwest. Footings for that fire tower are near a radio tower which is maintained by the Department of Transportation.

Natural History

The Smoky Hills and Two Inlets state forests are located near a transition zone between the coniferous and deciduous forest biomes. The soils under these rolling to hilly landscapes all formed under forest vegetation. Most of the uplands contained pines; most of the lowlands became conifer bogs and swamp. Because of climate and the sandy soils, the land is suitable for forests and farming, especially potatoes. The Smoky Hills State Forest is excellent for viewing colorful fall foliage.

Geologic History

When the last glaciers in the area left about 10,000 years ago, it left a complex landscape of glacial features such as moraines and outwash plains. Moraines are piles of unsorted glacial till composed of sand, clay, rocks, and boulders. In the Smoky Hills State Forest, soils are typically sandy. The flat, sandy Ponsford Prairie area which encompasses the area between the Smoky Hills and Two Inlets state forests (including Shell Lake and the mouth of the Shell River area) are evidence of a glacial outwash plain—an area where melt water settled.

Management Activities

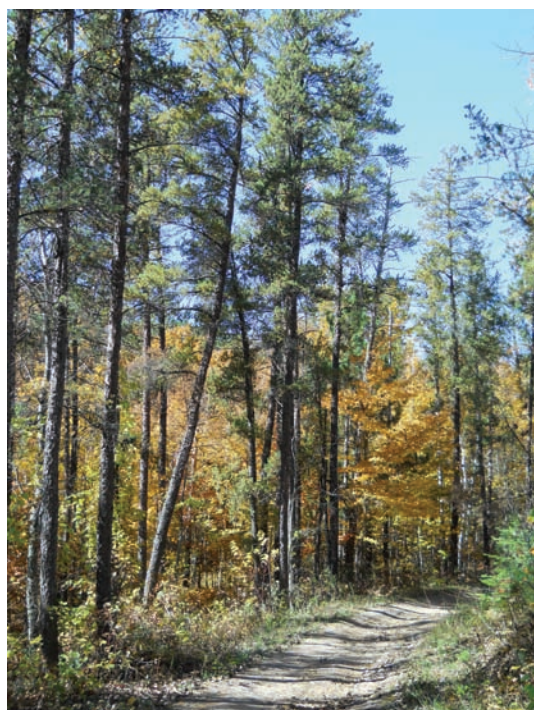
Smoky Hills State Forest has 25,278 acres of land, of which 14,909 acres are state land. The rest is privately owned or managed by Becker County. The Two Inlets State Forest has 28,051 acres of land, of which 13,850 acres are state land, 12,215 acres are privately owned, and 160 acres are managed by Becker County. In Minnesota, all state-managed lands are certified by third-party inspectors to ensure that all forest activities, such as logging, exceed internationally-recognized standards. Forest certification promotes responsible forest management and harvesting practices by considering the forest health, forest regeneration, species biodiversity, wildlife habitat, soil and water quality, and social impacts during growth and harvesting operations.

Trees and Plants

The Smoky Hills State Forest contains about 236 acres of northern hardwoods (sugar maple, basswood) and 64 acres of red pine which are designated as “old-growth.” Because of the sandy soils, drought-tolerant red pine thrives here.

In the Two Inlets state forest, 85 acres of red pine are designated as “old-growth.”

Trees growing in upland areas include aspen, jack pine, red pine, white pine, white spruce, bur oak, red oak, sugar maple, and basswood. Lowland areas are home to tamarack and black spruce.



Trail through sugar maples and jack pine in Smoky Hills State Forest.

Lakes and streams in the area contain large wild rice beds which produce abundant food for waterfowl in most years. Fruit and mushrooms can be picked in the nearby forests.



Morel mushrooms



Wild rice

Wildlife

Mammal sightings may include gray (timber) wolves, porcupine, black bear, coyote, beaver, otter, fisher, mink, bobcat, and porcupine, to name a few. In the fall, there is exceptional hunting for deer and ruffed grouse.

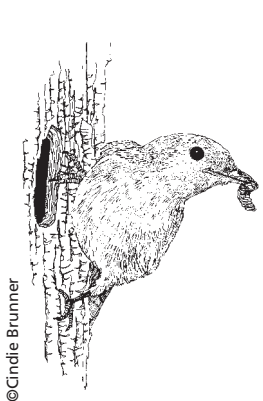


White-tailed deer



Ruffed grouse

Bald eagles and trumpeter swans are common. Visitors may also see common loons, red-shouldered hawks, broad-winged hawks, wild turkeys, marsh wrens, red-necked grebes, kingfishers, common yellowthroats, eastern bluebirds, and neotropical migrants. The sounds of drumming ruffed grouse, red-winged blackbirds, and wood frogs are plentiful in the spring.



Eastern bluebird



Bald eagle



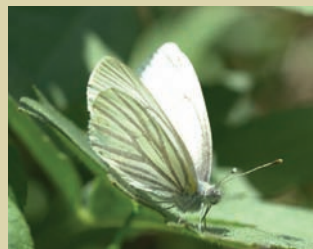
Wood frog

Greenwater Lake Scientific and Natural Area (SNA)

This SNA is just north of (but not in) the Smoky Hills State Forest.

Greenwater Lake SNA can be reached from County Highway 35. It consists of a pristine, spring-fed lake dominated by a single species of diatom (a type of algae) that occurs only rarely in other lakes. The dominance of this diatom species may indicate that the lake is chemically stratified—that is, its waters do not circulate throughout the entire lake basin. These features and the lake's low nutrient levels make Greenwater Lake of special interest in research about nutrient levels of lakes. Greenwater Lake has an undeveloped shoreline and is surrounded by hills of aspen and birch. Uncommon butterfly species—

Appalachian brown, mustard white, and pine elfin—have been found here. The best time to visit is when spring wildflowers are in bloom.



Mustard white butterfly (*Pieris napi*)

Photo by David Cappae, MI State University, Bugwood.org

SNAs are established to preserve and perpetuate the ecological diversity of Minnesota's natural heritage, including landforms, fossil remains, plant and animal communities, rare and endangered species, or other biotic features and geological formations for scientific study.

SNAs are open to the public for nature observation and education, but are not meant for intensive recreational activities. As a general rule there are no trails, restrooms, or other facilities. Pets are not permitted.

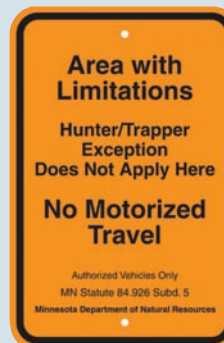
Recreation in the Smoky Hills and Two Inlets State Forests

Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing

Hunting, trapping, and fishing are allowed during the appropriate season and with the correct license. Private holdings within state forests may be posted with “no hunting,” “private property,” or “no trespassing” signs. Hunting on private land within a state forest is subject to state trespass laws.

Hunter Walking Trails exist in the Smoky Hills State Forest. Most trails are signed. Trails are designed to provide comparatively easy access to areas used for hunting.

“Areas With Limitations” encompass most of the northwest part of the Smoky Hills State Forest. In the Two Inlets State Forest, “Areas With Limitations” exist in the western portion and all the areas west of Hwy 135. In Areas With Limitations, motorized users must stay on designated forest roads and trails. The hunter/trapper exemption does not apply here.



Watch for this sign.



Snowmobile trail shelter at Two Inlets State Forest.

Turn in Poachers: 1-800-652-9093

Hiking

Hiking is allowed year-round. During hunting and trapping seasons it is recommended that hikers and companion animals wear blaze orange and avoid wearing brown or white-colored clothing.

Motorized Vehicle Use

All of the Smoky Hills and all of the Two Inlets state forests are classified as **limited**.

All motorized vehicles in the Smoky Hills and the Two Inlets state forests must:

- Travel at a reasonable and prudent speed, and obey posted speed limits and other traffic regulation signs.
- Observe road, route, and trail closures, indicated by signs, barricades, or gates.
- Yield to non-motorized users and shut off the vehicle when meeting a horse until the horse has passed or until waved on by the rider or driver of the horse.
- Minnesota law requires all off-highway vehicles (OHVs), all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), off-highway motorcycles (OHMs), snowmobiles, and off-road vehicles (such as jeeps and 4x4 trucks) to display a current registration sticker.



Watch for this sign.

Snowmobile Riding

Snowmobile Trail Stickers are required for all snowmobiles on snowmobile trails. (mndnr.gov/snowmobiling)

ATV Riding

ATV Trail Passes are required for non-residents. OHV information can be found at mndnr.gov/ohv.



OHV riding trail in Smoky Hills State Forest.

State Forest Rules

A complete list of rules and laws regulating state forest activities is available at mndnr.gov/state_forests.

Camping

If you're looking for fewer people and a relaxed atmosphere, then state forest campgrounds are for you. Many state forest campgrounds feature spacious, shaded campsites along lakes or rivers.

All campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The campsites are considered “primitive.” They consist of a cleared area, fire ring, and table. Vault toilets, garbage cans, and drinking water are available. Camping fees are collected at the campgrounds.

Dispersed camping (camping outside of designated campsites and campgrounds on state forest land) is permitted. There are no furnished amenities or fees. Practice “leave no trace” camping and pack out what you packed in.

Campfires

As a state forest visitor, you may have campfires in designated fire rings at campsites or in an area cleared of combustible materials 5 feet in all directions around the fire. All fires must be 3 feet or less in diameter.

Have a responsible person attend to the fire at all times. Even a small breeze could quickly cause the fire to spread.

Extinguish the campfire with water using the drown and stir method.

Firearms

Firearms may be discharged in compliance with the law on state forest lands not posted closed to firearms discharge. Please clean up your spent rounds before you leave.

Shooting ranges, where designated, have special rules. Observe postings on site.

While hunting, firearms must be unloaded; bows must not be armed with bolt or arrow while in or within 200 feet of a state forest recreation area (campground, day-use area, parking area, etc.).

Invasives

Firewood and Larvae

Transporting firewood is a major culprit in spreading emerald ash borer (EAB) and other insect pests. Larvae and pupae can hide beneath the bark and then escape as adult beetles after being transported many miles.

The danger of spreading EAB and other invasive species convinced the 2007 Minnesota Legislature to pass a law prohibiting visitors from bringing unapproved firewood onto state land. If you want to have a campfire in a state forest or state park, you can only use local approved wood either purchased on site or from a local approved firewood vendor (mndnr.gov/firewood). Dead wood may be gathered for campfires on site in state forests.

Mud and Seeds

Don't like weeds? Don't spread seeds!

Hundreds of weed seeds may be caked in the mud on your tires, boots, and gear. Before you leave, remove mud from your stuff—and put it in a safe place where seeds can't sprout.

Some invasive weeds in northern Minnesota state forests include: Canada thistle, European buckthorn, Siberian elm, spotted knapweed, oxeye daisy, common tansy, crown vetch, flowering rush, butter-and-eggs, and hoary alyssum.

Gathering in a State Forest

If you know what to look for, the forest can be a smorgasbord of gourmet delights. Please be responsible. It's OK to collect berries, nuts, and mushrooms for personal use. Gathering eggs is not allowed. In general, gather less than 75 percent of the wild plants you find, and cut only the leaves of wild greens. Cut mushrooms above the ground. Leave overripe berries behind so the seeds can produce more bushes. Permits are required for commercial harvest of medicinal plants, wild foods such as wild rice and seeds, and decorative and floral greens, including birch bark.



Smoky Hills fire tower.

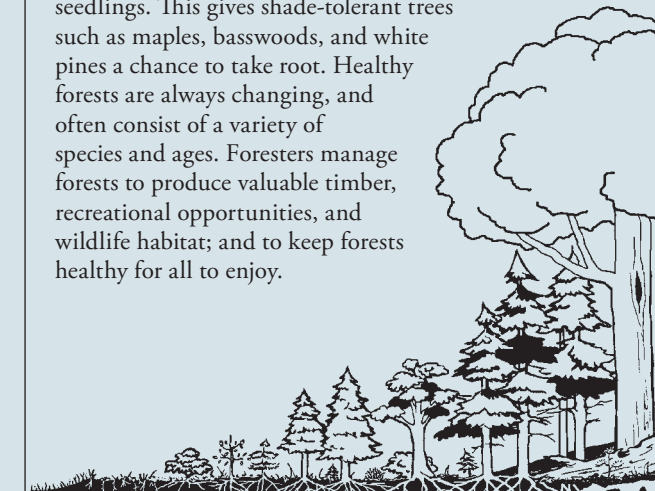
Features

The Hungry Man Campground and Day-Use Area is located on the south shore of Hungry Man Lake in the northeast part of the Two Inlets State Forest. This facility features campsites, picnic tables, one toilet, drinking water, a drive-in boat ramp, and good fishing and swimming opportunities. Rising above the treetops in the Smoky Hills State Forest, you may find the Smoky Hills fire tower built by early DNR forester Don Wilson in 1926.

Do You Know...

Why Forests Change?

For millennia, forests have changed naturally through a process called *succession*. Typically, after a disturbance like fire, storms, or development, the first plants to establish are sun-loving trees like aspen and jack pine. (In many areas, if not managed, a disturbance can also attract invasive species such as buckthorn and garlic mustard.) As these “first succession” trees grow large and age, they shade out their own seedlings. This gives shade-tolerant trees such as maples, basswoods, and white pines a chance to take root. Healthy forests are always changing, and often consist of a variety of species and ages. Foresters manage forests to produce valuable timber, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat; and to keep forests healthy for all to enjoy.



For More Information

In case of emergency call 911



Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040
651-296-6157 (Metro Area)
1-888-MINNDNR (646-6367) (MN Toll Free)
mndnr.gov e-mail: info.dnr@state.mn.us

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