

JUNEAU 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 Juneau 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 Juneau County Outdoor Recreation Plan also guides the recreation programs in Juneau County. This plan is revised every five years and is made part of this Plan. The Juneau 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 Forestry Committee.

## **910 AUTHORITY**

The Juneau County Code of Ordinances Sec. 24-69 and s.28.11 Wis. Stats, authorize the Juneau County Land, Forestry, Parks and Zoning 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 Juneau County Forest program are appended or referenced in 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 similar State, private facilities or other adjacent counties 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
2. ATV trail grading 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. The Juneau County Land, Forestry, Parks and Zoning Committee has traditionally granted the Wisconsin Bowhunters Association a Special Use Permit to utilize Kennedy Park for three days in the fall to conduct their annual Broadhead Shoot event for their members.

**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 Juneau County Code of Ordinances regulates activities relating to hunting. Refer to Chapter 1000 for a full text of the Ordinance.

[https://library.municode.com/wi/juneau\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=CH24PARE\\_ARTIIRURE\\_S24-57HUF1](https://library.municode.com/wi/juneau_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH24PARE_ARTIIRURE_S24-57HUF1)

In general the following activities are regulated:

#### 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 Juneau 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. Damage to property
3. Fires may not be left unattended unless the ground is 100% snow covered
4. Personal conduct
5. Dogs and other pets

#### 930.4 CAMPING

A permit is required to camp outside of developed campgrounds on the County Forest. The County Forest camping permit is appended in Chapter 1000. Permits are available from the County Forestry Office or online: <https://www.co.juneau.wi.gov/forestry.html>

In general the following activities are regulated:

1. All litter, trash or rubbish must be removed
2. Damage to property
3. Fires may not be left unattended unless the ground is 100% snow covered
4. Personal conduct
5. Dogs and other pets

#### 930.5 MOTORIZED TRAVEL

The Juneau County Code of Ordinances Chapter 32, Article IX. - Wheeled Motor-Driven Vehicles on County Property regulates motorized uses on the County Forest. The full text of these regulations can be found at:

[https://library.municode.com/wi/juneau\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=CH32TRMOVE\\_ARTIXWHMOIVVECOPR](https://library.municode.com/wi/juneau_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH32TRMOVE_ARTIXWHMOIVVECOPR)

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 County Forest Road (gas tax)
3. Operation of utility terrain vehicles (UTV) and all-terrain vehicles (ATV) on County-owned land is prohibited except as outlined on designated trails and County Forest road routes. Designated trails and County Forest routes are appended or referenced in Chapter 1000.

#### 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. A 3.5 mile designated Horseback riding trail is established at Bass Hollow Recreation Area. The Horseback riding

trail can also be used by hikers and does not prohibit Mountain Bike use. A map of the Bass Hollow Recreation Area and horseback riding trail is appended in Chapter 1000.

## **935 DESIGNATED RECREATION AREAS/USES**

Designated recreation includes those uses for which the County provides a trail or facility. The Juneau County Forest has developed sites and areas to accommodate a fairly 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. Juneau County may attempt to develop additional facilities and will maintain its currently developed facilities.

### **935.1 CAMPGROUNDS**

935.1.1 Castle Rock Park and Campground is located at N6700 22nd Ave. Mauston, WI 53948 (off of HWY G). The park facilities include 289 campsites, electricity, several water wells, two shower houses, pit toilets, beach, boat landing, dump station, firewood sales, and other amenities. The facility is fee based for camping and day use. Castle Rock Park and Campground is classified as Special Use County Forest Land and a map of the park is appended in Chapter 1000.

935.1.2 Wilderness Park and Campground is located at N14054 21st Ave. Necedah, WI 54646. The park facilities include 127 campsites, electricity, several water wells, shower house, pit toilets, beach, boat landing, dump station, firewood sales, and other amenities. The facility is fee based for camping and day use. Wilderness Park and Campground is classified as Special Use County Forest Land and a map of the park is appended in Chapter 1000.

935.1.3 Kennedy Park is located at N7420 County Rd M New Lisbon, WI 53950. The park facilities include 15 campsites, a hand pump well, pit toilets, canoe/kayak landing, shelter and hiking trails. The facility is fee based for camping. Kennedy

Park is classified as Special Use County Forest Land and a map of the park is appended in Chapter 1000.

### 935.2 PICNIC / DAY USE AREAS

Picnic areas open to the public include:

- Bass Hollow Recreation Area
- Two Rivers Public Access
- Lemonweir Mills Public Access
- Kennedy Park
- Castle Rock Park
- Wilderness Park

### 935.3 SWIMMING AREAS / BEACHES

Swimming areas are provided for at Castle Rock Park and Wilderness Park. No lifeguards are stationed at these swimming areas.

### 935.5 BOAT LANDINGS

As a result of the wide distribution of lakes, streams, rivers, and other surface waters in Juneau County, several boat landings and canoe landings have been developed to provide water access 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.

Not all sizes of 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.

The following access sites have been developed on the Juneau County Forest and other County owned lands are open to public use:



935.5.1 Public Boat Access Sites Maintained by Juneau County Land, Forestry and Parks Department.

- Castle Rock Park
- Wilderness Park
- Lemonweir Mills Public Access
- Two Rivers Public Access
- Buckley Mills Canoe Launch
- Kennedy Park Lemonweir River Access

935.5.2 Public Boat Access Sites Maintained by Towns

Several Cities and Towns operate and maintain their own boat launches. Additional Information can be found by referencing the Juneau County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Link to Outdoor Recreation Plan: <http://www.ncwrpc.org/juneau/orp/index.html>

935.5.3 Public Boat Access Sites Maintained by the DNR

The Wisconsin DNR operates and maintain their own boat launches. Additional Information can be found by referencing the Juneau County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

**940 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 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. Trail systems are identified in Chapter 1000.

## 940.1 NON-MOTORIZED RECREATION TRAILS

The Juneau 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

All developed trails are open to use by hikers on the Juneau County Forest except where posted as closed to protect the resource. The Juneau County Forest provides hiking opportunities at several locations.

- Yellow River Bottoms Hunting and Walking Trails.

The trails in the Yellow River Bottoms Unit of the Juneau County Forest are mowed in the fall before the hunting season by the Forestry Department. The trails are easily identified by the mowed paths and provide access to a large block of Bottomland Hardwood Forest and the Yellow River. A map is available at: <https://www.co.juneau.wi.gov/trails.html>

- Bass Hollow Recreation Area

The Bass Hollow Recreation Area has a 3.5 mile hiking trail that is also used for horseback riding. The trail is periodically maintained during the summer by Juneau County seasonal Forestry Department staff. A map is available at: <https://www.co.juneau.wi.gov/parks.html>

### 940.1.2 Bicycle Trails

Bicycle use is permitted on all developed trails except where posted to protect the resource. Bicycle use extends to fat tired bikes and mountain bikes unless otherwise posted. The Juneau County Forest does not maintain designated fat tire bike or mountain bike trails. Juneau County owns and manages a rails-to-trails bike path

known as the Omaha Bike Trail (not on County Forest Lands). Maintenance of the Omaha Bike Trail is provided by the Forestry Department seasonal staff during the summer.

- Omaha Bike Trail

The Omaha Bike Trail is a paved 13 mile long walking & biking trail that connects Camp Douglas to Elroy. The Trail follows what was the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad line, which last operated in 1987. The railroad was converted to a bike trail and opened in 1992. Snowmobiles are permitted to use the trail in winter. More information can be found at:

<https://www.co.juneau.wi.gov/trails.html>

#### 940.1.3 Equestrian Trails

- Bass Hollow Recreation Area

The Bass Hollow Recreation Area has a 3.5 mile trail that is designated for horseback riding. The trail is periodically looked after during the summer by Juneau County Forestry Department seasonal staff. A map is available at:

<https://www.co.juneau.wi.gov/parks.html>

#### 940.1.4 Ski Trails

Juneau County does not presently operate or maintain ski trails on the County Forest. Cross-Country Skiing is permitted off trail or on non-groomed trails on Juneau County Forest land.

#### 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 can be supported by the Federal Recreational Trails Program or through user groups. 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 Juneau County Land, Forestry & Parks Department oversees the management of the snowmobile trail system in Juneau County. Annual agreements outline the operation, maintenance and insurance obligations between the County and local clubs. A map of the Juneau County Snowmobile system is provided in Appendix 1020.1.

The County contracts with the following snowmobile clubs for trail maintenance:

- Winter Wanderers Snowmobile Club - New Lisbon, WI
- Redstone Riders Snowmobile Club - La Valle, WI
- Castle Rock River Runners Snowmobile Club - Mauston, WI
- Sunset Drifters Snowmobile Club – Nekoosa, WI
- Hillsboro Trailblazers Snowmobile Club – Hillsboro, WI
- Lyndon Knights Snowmobile Club – Lyndon Station, WI

The Juneau County Code of Ordinances (Chapter 32, Article VI) regulates snowmobile use and snowmobile trails. A summary of rules and regulations relating to snowmobile trails is as follows:

- a. Snowmobile trails are closed to cars and trucks from December 1<sup>st</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- b. The Juneau County Snowmobile Coordinator will make determinations to officially open and close snowmobile trails based on snow and maintenance conditions, and with coordination with the Juneau County Snowmobile Clubs.

- c. Snowmobile trails used for logging access during snowmobile season will be posted with signs warning users of logging activity.

Additional information can be found at:

[https://library.municode.com/wi/juneau\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances](https://library.municode.com/wi/juneau_county/codes/code_of_ordinances)

Juneau County recognizes the following categories of snowmobile trail:

#### 940.2.1.1 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 247.4 miles of funded trails in Juneau County.

Unfunded Trails – these 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. It is recommended that the county continues to apply for grants to include these in the funded system.

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 72 miles of unfunded Club trails in Juneau County.

#### 940.2.1.2 Trail Maintenance

Juneau County contracts with several snowmobile clubs (Listed under 940.2.1) to sign, brush and groom the funded snowmobile trail system. The Juneau County Forestry Department periodically assists with mowing and other maintenance

projects as needed. In addition, the Forestry Department shall also attempt to secure funding from State grants, and other sources, to periodically replace or rehabilitate snowmobile bridges and other infrastructure on the trail system.

#### 940.2.2 Designated ATV Trails

Designated ATV Trails are those recognized by the 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 following snowmobile/ATV clubs for trail maintenance:

- Winter Wanderers Snowmobile Club - New Lisbon, WI
- Castle Rock Family ATV Club – Necedah, WI
- Petenwell ATV Club – Nekoosa, WI

Designated ATV trails and routes managed by Juneau County are further identified in Appendix 1020.2.

##### 940.2.2.1 Trail Types

The County recognizes several different classifications of ATV trail. Maps are appended for reference. Juneau County permits Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs or side-by-sides) and All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) that meet the State definition to use the funded ATV trail system.

1. Funded Winter ATV Trails – There are approximately 3 miles of winter funded ATV trail on County Forest lands.
2. Funded Summer ATV Trails – There are approximately 3 miles of summer use ATV trails on the County Forest. These trails are open from Memorial Weekend – October 15<sup>th</sup>.

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. Juneau County maintains 0 miles of County Forest Road Troutes.

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

#### 940.2.2.3 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 demonstrated a tremendous need for much higher levels of trail maintenance in order to manage environmental damages.

Adding ATV trails should be done as part of larger planning effort that incorporates considerations for impact on other users and user groups; how future trail systems will be maintained; and impact on the natural resources. New ATV trail systems will only be considered with the following framework:

- Trails should be designed and planned to connect communities.
- Loop trails will be discouraged unless part of a larger trail system that connects communities.
- New trails on County Forest Land will require approval by the Committee.
- Trails will only be considered on suitable soils and in appropriate locations.

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 to 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**, which is appended to this Plan in Chapter 1010.8.

#### 940.2.3 Designated Motorcycle Trails

Juneau County currently does not have any designated motorcycle trails.

#### 940.2.4 Other Designated Motor Vehicle Trails



Juneau County currently does not have any other designated motor vehicle trails.

### 940.3 RECREATION TRAIL PERMITS

#### 940.3.1 Storm Water Discharge

In general, any trail construction or rehabilitation activities that disturb one acre of 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 or estimating new 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 completion for these funds.

### **945.2 RECREATION TRAIL FUNDING**

#### **945.2.1 Non-motorized trail systems**

At this time, the Recreational Trails Program provides grant funds that assist with non-motorized recreational trail development and maintenance. Juneau County relies on trail passes to help support the Omaha Bike Trail.

#### **945.2.2 Motorized trail systems**

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

1. Snowmobile Maintenance - \$300/mile
2. ATV Summer Maintenance - \$600/mile
3. ATV Winter Maintenance - \$100/mile
4. Snowmobile Trail Aids (WI DNR) - 100% grants
5. ATV/UTV Trail Aids (WI DNR) - 100% grants