

WASHBURN RANGER DISTRICT TRAIL REPORT (12/01/2016)

Background

Through timber sales, the Washburn Ranger District has been using logging operations to clear downed timber across and adjacent to roads, trails and recreation sites following the July 21 storm event. The emergency closure order on the majority of the roads and trails was lifted on December 1, 2016. Please check the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest website for the updated map and closure order at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/cnnf>. Please be aware that there are still trees that are falling down near or onto trails and road right-of-ways due to the heavily saturated soils, especially when it is windy. The closure order remains in effect for the Birch Grove Campground and trail and FR 435 until further notice.

Motorized Trails

The repairs to the Drummond Connector Trail (Trail 63) from the Town of Drummond to Arnie Carlson Road is completed. With the rain and melting snow, the trail is heavily saturated and fragile. In an effort to keep the trail tread intact and free of rutting or other damage, the gates will remain closed and the closure order in effect until the trail freezes down. There is a signed route from Drummond to get to Grandview to access the trails on Bayfield County lands. Please use this route until the trail freezes down and the gates are opened for the season.

A majority of the ATV trails that were closed north of US HWY 2 following the storm event have been cleared through timber sales. The following sections of the trails are **open** for the snowmobile season as of December 1st:

- Trails 21 and 31 (both Iron River Trail) from Fire Tower Road to FR 242 have been cleared and graded.
- Trail 31 (Iron River Trail) from FR 236 east to FR 245 are open.
- Trail 63 (Moquah Spur) from Sand Forty Road heading north up to Trail 31 (Iron River Trail) on the south side of FR 251 (Wanabo Road) have been cleared and graded.
- Trail 31/33 (Valhalla Trails) north of FR 251 (Wanabo Road) up through to FR 695 have been cleared and graded.

The following trail will be open, but with logging activity continuing past December 1st:

- Trail 31 (Iron River Trail): From FR 242 east to FR 236 will have logging activity into late December so riders need to travel through this area with care.

The snowmobile trails are cleared and snowmobile club members are working on replacing signs and posts where needed. Trails 3 (Battle Axe), 40 (Lenawee), 66 (Flagg Road Connector), Trails 31/33/35 (Valhalla Trails north of FR 695) were not impacted by the storm event and are open. They are graded and ready for snow to fall for snowmobile riding. A huge "THANK YOU" goes out to all of our partners and contractors who helped get these trails cleared and ready for the winter season!

Non-Motorized Trails & Trailheads

Valhalla Recreation Area: Gravel work around both parking areas and facilities was completed this fall improving walking and driving access. Both parking areas are very saturated and the soils are very fragile. The Forest Service has temporarily closed both parking areas until the ground freezes to help prevent ruts or holes from foot and vehicle traffic. The soils on the trails are also very wet and fragile. Please refrain from using the trails to prevent any damage until they are frozen.

Drummond Ski Trailhead: Gravel work in this parking area and the installation of a new information kiosk was completed late this fall. This parking area is also very wet and fragile. The Forest Service has temporarily closed the parking area until the ground freezes to help prevent ruts or holes due to foot and vehicle traffic. The soils on the trails are also very wet and fragile. Please refrain from using the trails to prevent any damage until they are frozen.

The soils are very saturated with the melting snow and rain we have been receiving the last few weeks. Even though the Forest Service is lifting the use restrictions on closed portions of trails, we ask that the public refrain from using them until the soils are frozen. Protecting all trails on National Forest System lands during this time period reduces the likelihood of trail closures during the winter because we may not be able to fix extensive damage due to ground conditions. Please help keep our trails safe and in good condition for everyone to enjoy this winter.

If you have any other questions regarding to recreation sites or trails, please contact the Washburn Ranger District office at (715) 373-2667. Thank you for your cooperation and patience.

