



Frequently Asked Questions

What is Recreation Site Analysis (RSA)?

The Recreation Site Analysis is a comprehensive analysis of the forest's developed recreation sites. One hundred and ninety-three recreation sites, campgrounds, picnic grounds, trailheads, boat landings, beaches, and interpretive sites were inventoried and assessed by the Chequamegon-Nicolet's recreation specialists to determine the sites' values in contributing to recreation demand and preferences, environmental integrity, and the economic vitality of the forest and its communities.

The purpose of RSA is to evaluate how the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest can best provide quality and sustainable recreation opportunities in the long-run, given current and projected financial and staffing constraints as well as existing and projected visitor demands. The Forest looked at the type of recreation sites and amenities being offered across the landscape of northern Wisconsin (state, county, town and private) to identify gaps or overlaps in recreation opportunities.

Developed site benefits and costs were evaluated in consideration of the effects on the rest of the recreation programs, such as Wilderness and heritage program management, administration of outfitter/guide, motor vehicle use, visitor information, and other recreation services.

The result of this analysis is a 5-year Recreation Facility Strategy from which the Chequamegon-Nicolet will prioritize investments, as well as pursue changes in operations or maintenance of developed recreation sites and facilities. The strategy is intended to reduce operations and maintenance costs and maximize public benefits, while balancing social, economic, and environmental factors.

How can comments be submitted?

Comments on the proposed management actions can be submitted online through the interactive map on the Forest's website at www.fs.usda.gov/cnnf/. Visitors may also visit any of the Forest's offices, contact the Public Affairs Officer at 715-362-1354 or email CNNFAdmin@fs.fed.us.

The Forest is also hosting six public meetings/open houses to provide an opportunity for visitors to engage with staff, to learn more about the draft strategy, proposed management actions and to ask questions.

Public Meetings/Open Houses:

October 29 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Best Western in Crandon, WI

October 30 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Park Falls Ranger District Office in Park Falls, WI

November 5 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Medford Library in Medford, WI

November 7 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland, WI

November 8 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Cable Community Center in Cable, WI



Forest Service

Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
500 Hanson Lake Road, Rhinelander, WI 54501
Voice: (715) 362-1300 Fax: (715) 369-8859
www.fs.usda.gov/CNNF/

November 13 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the North Star Lanes in Antigo, WI

What will you do with the comments received on the proposed management actions?

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest will consider all comments and feedback received during the public engagement period October 15 through December 15. The feedback received will be evaluated and may be incorporated into changes made to the 5-year program of work identified in the Recreation Facility Strategy. We value your feedback and participation throughout this effort.

The Forest Service is looking for information, comments, and other assistance from Federal, State, and local agencies, tribes, landowners, and other individuals or organizations that have an interest in or could be affected by the proposed management actions. Specific comments are the most useful for the identification of issues development and analysis of alternatives to the proposed management actions.

The comments collected during this comment period as well as contact information will become part of the project record.

The Forest first began seeking comments on the value of its developed recreation sites through public engagement October-December 2017. The feedback received was incorporated into the draft proposed management actions that we are seeking comments on.

What is the difference between operating vs maintenance costs?

Operating costs include toilet cleaning, trash pickup, patrols, and other daily duties. Maintenance costs include repairing doors, re-roofing buildings, grading/graveling parking areas, etc. The agency often combines these figures because the total annual cost of operating and maintaining a recreation site is an important factor in the Recreation Site Analysis.

Could proposed management actions shift as a result of continued public input?

Proposed management actions may shift as a result of public input and changing conditions, but projected agency funding and resources will still constrain the total number of sites and services the Forest Service can provide into the future.



What does it mean when it says “recreation use fee would increase or current camping fee would increase”?

The Forest did implement fee changes in 2018 after approval from the Recreation Resource Advisory Committee. The Forest plans to propose fee changes through the Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (which will include public engagement) as the 5-year Recreation Facility Strategy is implemented.



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These fee proposals would be actions such as campgrounds with new amenities (electric sites, new double or group sites) or day use sites should national direction for recreation use fees change from the current standard \$5.00 fee.

Are any sites going to be closed or be decommissioned?

The Forest is proposing to convert 22 sites to general forest area as infrastructure is removed. The access to these sites will be maintained through roads listed as open on the Motor Vehicle Use Map.

What does it mean when it says “convert back to general forest areas?”

General forest areas are anywhere in the forest open to the public where there is no active recreation management such as hazard tree removal, regular trash collections, routine patrols or other restrictions. These areas are typically also void of improvements like fire rings, toilets, and picnic tables.



What does it mean when it says “alternative funding sources as available?”

The Forest does have the capability to supplement recreation program funding through alternative funding sources such as the Stewardship Authority, Good Neighbor Authority, Capital Invest Funds and other Grants and Agreements. The recreation sites with proposed management actions that include this language would only happen if alternative funding sources were to become available.

What does it mean when it says “a partner will be pursued?”

The forest welcomes partner engagement at all of our recreation sites. We have identified some unique sites through RSA that would be opportunities for a partner to operate and maintain. If partners are not found, the Forest will consider the trade-offs of investing in the site or converting the site to a general forest area.

When will the Recreation Facility Strategy be finalized?

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest plans to complete public engagement on the draft proposed management actions by December 15. The comments received will be evaluated and may be incorporated into the final 5-year Recreation Facility Strategy. The Forest expects to release the final Recreation Facility Strategy in spring of 2019 prior to the recreation season.



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When might changes called for in the Final RFS be made to recreation sites?

The forest expects to begin implementing the 5-year Recreation Facility Strategy during the 2019 recreation season. Some actions may require a level of environmental analysis through the National Environmental Policy Act. The comments collected during this comment period as well as contact information will become part of the project record. There will be an opportunity for continued public engagement through this process.



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