

**Final Environmental Impact Statement
for
Forest Plan Revision
Chippewa National Forest
Superior National Forest**

Eastern Region
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
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Abstract

This Final Environmental Impact Statement documents the analysis of seven alternatives. The alternatives are different ways to manage the Chippewa and Superior National Forests. The alternative that was selected was the basis for developing Revised Forest Plans that will guide all natural resource management activities on the Forests. The Forest Service developed the alternatives with input from the public and from other agencies. The Regional Forester will explain the rationale for selecting one of the alternatives in the Record of Decision.

Alternative A would continue to use the management direction in the current (1986) Forest Plans as amended. Alternative A would emphasize early successional forests, primarily use even-aged management, and emphasize developed and undeveloped recreational opportunities.

Alternative B would emphasize older forests and mixed conifer forests, mostly use partial cutting and uneven-aged management, and emphasize semi-primitive recreation as both motorized and non-motorized opportunities.

Alternative C would emphasize early successional and young forests, replicate large-scale natural disturbances using primarily even-aged management, and emphasize developed and undeveloped recreation.

Alternative D would emphasize old forest, use limited partial cutting for restoration and emphasize natural succession, and emphasize semi-primitive recreation that is non-motorized.

Modified Alternative E would emphasize young and old forest settings, increase the amount of uneven-aged management from what is current used, and emphasize developed and undeveloped recreation as both motorized and non-motorized opportunities.

Alternative F would emphasize moving vegetation towards the range of natural variability, use a mix of even-aged and uneven-aged management, and emphasize developed and undeveloped recreation as both motorized and non-motorized opportunities.

Alternative G would emphasize old and young forests, use a mix of even-aged and uneven-aged management, and emphasize developed and undeveloped recreation as both motorized and non-motorized opportunities.

The selected alternative will:

- Address changed conditions and management direction that have occurred since the current Forest Plans were released
- Meet the objectives of federal laws, regulations, and policies.

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Preface

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) documents the effects of implementing different ways of managing the Chippewa and Superior National Forests. The EIS is the basis for determining what changes will be made to current Forest Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plans) for both Forests. There are two companion documents to this EIS: a Revised Forest Plan for the Chippewa National Forest and a Revised Forest Plan for the Superior National Forest.

The two National Forests are revising their Forest Plans together for several reasons:

- Both Forest Plans were in need of revision
- The two Forests share similar issues and ecosystems
- Working together promotes consistency between Forests

However, the process resulted in two Revised Forest Plans, one for each National Forest. Each Plan is based on the selected alternative (identified in the Records of Decision).

The EIS is divided into two separate volumes. Volume 1 has four chapters and is the main body of the document. Volumes 2 and 3 are the appendices to the EIS.

Chapter 1 describes why the Forest Service proposed to revise the Forest Plans. It explains the following:

1. What is proposed?
2. Why is change needed?
3. What decisions are made in Forest Plans?
4. How were the public, tribal governments, and other agencies involved?
5. What issues are addressed?
6. What issues are not addressed?

Chapter 1 also summarizes the changes made between Draft and Final EIS.

Chapter 2 describes and briefly compares alternative ways of managing the Chippewa and Superior

National Forests. With the public, an interdisciplinary team developed the alternatives to provide a reasonable range of different ways to respond to issues. Chapter 2 briefly compares the potential environmental and social effects of each alternative.

Chapter 3 describes the current condition of resources that could be affected by the alternatives. It also discusses in more detail the environmental and social effects of implementing each alternative.

Chapter 4 lists the people who prepared the EIS.

Chapter 5 lists the people and governmental agencies that were consulted during the revision process.

Following Chapter 5, you will find a list of references and a glossary of term used in the EIS. You will also find an index at the end of Volume 1.

Volume 2 includes the following Appendices:

- A.** Public Involvement
- B.** Analysis Processes
- C.** Forest Roadless Areas Inventory and Evaluation
- D.** Management Indicator Habitats
- E.** Wild and Scenic River Process
- F.** Transportation Systems
- G.** Landscape Ecosystems and Range of Natural Variability
- H.** Summary of the Minnesota Generic EIS and the Minnesota Forest Resources Council Landscape Goals
- I.** Relevant Statutes, Regulations, Policies, and Agreements

Volume 3 is Appendix J Response to Comments, which summarizes the public comments received on the Draft EIS and proposed Forest Plans and the Forest Service responses.