

WHAT IS AN OUTFITTER GUIDE PERMIT?

The Superior National Forest is used by hundreds of organized groups each year. These groups provide important public recreation needs on the forest. Many also make money in providing these services. The Outfitter/Guide Permit encourages skilled and experienced individuals, organizations and companies to conduct outfitting and guiding activities in a manner that assures National Forest visitors receive services of high quality. The permit also provides a mechanism for getting a fair value return and to exercise some control over commercial use of the National Forest.

WHO NEEDS AN OUTFITTER/GUIDE PERMIT?

All individual or organizations (including non-profit organizations) conducting outfitting and/or guiding activities on National Forest land or adjacent waters should make an inquiry as to whether or not such activity would be properly classified as “commercial.” This includes anyone assisting others in providing outdoor recreation experiences on the Superior National Forest. Some examples are: Commercial guides, church or youth groups, ski instructors, bus tours, or canoe liveries. If commercial, such activity may only be conducted after applying for and receiving an Outfitter/Guide Permit. If there is no charge, fee, donation or tuition related to the program activity and if the group leader is not paid, an Outfitter/Guide Permit may not be required. A Forest Service representative will make the decision on whether a permit is needed.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

The minimum fee for an Outfitter/Guide permit is currently \$95.00 per year effective 2008. See the attached sheet for additional fee information. (Fees are subject to change 2011)

WHAT DOES THE PERMIT REQUIRE?

The permit lists the permit holder’s responsibilities and provides conditions and limitations under which the group should operate. An operating plan showing the tentative schedule of trips, numbers of participants, as well as other pertinent information may be required annually.

One of the most important stipulations is the insurance requirement. The permit requires public liability insurance (Combined Single Limit) in the amount of \$300,000.00. The insurance policy will contain a clause stating that the policy will not be canceled or deleted before 30 days written notice to the Forest Service. The insurance policy must name the United States of America as “additional insured.” There is usually an additional premium for this coverage, which the permit holder must pay.

IS USE OF WILDERNESS AUTHORIZED?

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness is within the Superior National Forest. An Outfitter/Guide Permit authorizes commercial use in the wilderness; however, there are specific regulations in effect to preserve the wilderness experience including a maximum group size of nine people. Also, a separate BWCAW entry permit for each group is required in addition to the Outfitter/Guide Permit. Because of the restrictions and the high impact of groups on this special area, you may discover that other back country areas which are available on the Superior National Forest are more suitable for your group's program(s).

HOW DO I APPLY?

You should apply no later than January 31 of each year for Summer season permits effective May 1 – September 30, and no later than June 30 for Winter season permits effective October 1 – April 30, to allow sufficient time to process your application. Complete the application and send it to the Ranger District that will receive the majority of your use. If you're unsure of what Districts are involved, send it to the Forest Supervisor's Office, 8901 Grand Avenue Place, Duluth, MN 55808.

HOW IS IT ENFORCED?

A Forest Officer may request to see the group's Outfitter/Guide Identification Card that must be carried by the outfitter/guide whenever the group is on National Forest land. Outfitter/guides that do not comply may be issued a notice of violation.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Superior National Forest 8901 Grand Ave. Place Duluth, MN 55808 218-626-4300	Tofte Ranger District PO Box 2159 Tofte, MN 55615 218-663-8060	Kawishiwi Ranger District 1393 Highway 169 Ely, MN 55731 218-365-7600
Gunflint Ranger District 2020 W. Highway 61 Grand Marais, MN 55604 218-387-1750	Laurentian Ranger District 318 Forestry Road Aurora, MN 55705 218-229-8800	LaCroix Ranger District 320 N. Hwy 53 Cook, MN 55723 218-666-0020