

### [Ecological Reference Areas on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest](#)

These are areas of the Forest where Nature controls the processes. Very little or no management takes place in these sites -- leaving the work to nature. They contain unique areas with ecologically significant features such as unique geological formations, hard-to-find plant and animal species and historic features. The Forest protects these areas so visitors can enjoy and learn from these areas.

Many of our sites are included in [Wisconsin's State Natural Areas](#) program. These areas protect outstanding examples of Wisconsin's native landscape of natural communities, significant geological formations and archeological. These sites are valuable for research and educational use, the preservation of genetic and biological diversity and for providing benchmarks for determining the impact of use on managed lands.

[See a list of state natural areas on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest!](#)