



News Release

Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

For Immediate Release

Contact: Public Affairs Officer, Suzanne Flory (715) 362-1354

Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Safety Alert

Rhineland, Wis. (April 29, 2013) – Over the last three years the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF), in cooperation with an interagency enforcement action, eradicated numerous marijuana grows that were cultivated by large Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO). These grow sites were located on the Nicolet land base (2010/2012) and the Chequamegon land base (2011); all were first reported by a hunters and fishermen.

The illegal activity of growing and harvesting marijuana on public lands is expected to continue. The safety of the public and employees is the top priority for the U.S Forest Service. The Chequamegon- Nicolet National Forest and other public lands are being used for these illegal operations as they are often vast, uninhabited acres the growers find have the right conditions for their illegal operations.

Typically, planting occurs in the spring and the plants are harvested in late summer. Even with the late snow melt in much of Northern Wisconsin activity may already be occurring with these illegal grows.

These DTO marijuana growers are dangerous and are known to carry firearms! The CNNF asks that visitors be aware of their surroundings and know what to do to remain safe. Although it is unlikely you will come across one of these sites knowing how to recognize them is vital.

Indicators of illegal marijuana grow sites include:

- Isolated tents in the forest where no other recreational activity is present
- Garden tools, bags of fertilizer, and large amounts of garbage
- Signs of cultivation/soil disturbances (many holes) in unlikely areas
- 1 to 2 acre (or smaller) cleared areas with stumps up to approximately 3 feet tall

If you encounter a site, or unusual circumstances you should take these actions immediately:

- Leave the area as quickly and quietly as possible
- Do your best to know your location by use of landmarks or waypoints
- Notify local law enforcement authorities, if on National Forest you can also notify the local Ranger District Office.

Authorities will continue to work together to decrease this unlawful and damaging activity. Your assistance is important to help stop marijuana growing in your National Forest.

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