



Scoping Notice

Highway W Gravel Pit Expansion
USDA Forest Service (USFS)
Lakewood-Laona Ranger District
Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
Oconto County, Wisconsin

Background

The Lakewood-Laona Ranger District has identified Highway W Gravel Pit as a source for sand and gravel needed for future road maintenance, timber sale roads (especially in the blowdown area), and local cooperative road maintenance. This gravel pit will need to be expanded to be able to excavate additional sand and gravel from these sources. This gravel pit source is located at Township 31 North, Range 16 East, Sections 7 and 18.

Proposed Action

The Forest Service proposes to authorize the expansion of the existing gravel pit source. The table below shows the estimated existing, proposed, and total gravel pit expansion acres.

Pit Name & ID number	Existing acres	Expansion acres	Total Developed acres
Highway W Pit	3.0	5.0	8.0

The existing pit acres would be expanded over the next 10 years up to the total developed acres. This project includes the removal of 5 acres of trees; the removal and stock piling of tree stumps and other organic material; and top soil for future use in reclamation of these gravel sources. Raw sand and gravel would be excavated from the expansion acres and the pit floors for use as pit run, rip-rap, or crushed gravel and stock piled for local road maintenance, timber sales, and other needs. After excavation and crushing operations are completed, reclamation and revegetation of excavated and disturbed area would be completed for safety, site stabilization of exposed soil, and storm water runoff control. The gravel pit site location and proposed pit expansion area are shown on the attached map.

Purpose and Need

Currently the supply of sand and gravel is running low. The desired condition is to keep a supply of these materials. The Lakewood-Laona District has identified a need to expand the gravel pit from the existing 3 acres of developed gravel source up to a total of 8 acres of developed gravel source over the next 10 years for the purpose of excavation of sand and gravel.

There is a need for sand and gravel, which are an important resource for the maintenance of National Forest infrastructure. Forest road maintenance is often accomplished in cooperation with local cooperators to maintain the local road infrastructure. Maintenance of the Forest road and trail systems are the primary uses of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF) sand and gravel resource, but other uses such as rip-rap for

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aquatic habitat enhancement and erosion control or sand and gravel material for recreation facilities projects and timber sale road spurs are additional potential uses.

The Chequamegon-Nicolet Land and Resource Management Plan (forest plan) of 2004 provides the following direction:

- Forest Plan Goal 2.6 states (page 1-6) “Contribute toward satisfying demand for mineral and energy resources through environmentally sound responsible development on National Forest System lands”.
- Forest Plan Goal 3.1 states (page 1-7) “Build and maintain safe, efficient, and effective infrastructure that supports public and administrative uses of National Forest System lands.”

The proposed project shall meet the requirements of the forest plan. The proposal shall comply fully with forest wide standards and guidelines, and the Management Area Direction, including that contained under Management Areas;

- 2C “Uneven-Aged Northern Hardwoods-mixed forest” (Chapter 3, pages 3-7, 3-9 through 3-11).

Preliminary issues

Internal scoping has identified the following issues:

- Storm water runoff management in active developed gravel sources. All active National Forest gravel sources are managed under a Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System general permit for the control of storm water runoff. Gravel source development shall comply with the provisions of the general permit for storm water control.
- Non-native invasive species (NNIS) would be controlled through equipment cleaning, stabilization/revegetation of exposed soil, and monitoring and removal of NNIS.

Decisions to be Made

Through the environmental analysis process, the District Ranger will determine whether or not this project will proceed, and if so, where and under what conditions it will proceed.

Relevant Laws and Documents

36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 228, Subpart C, 228.43(a), Policy governing disposal of mineral materials), states “Forest Service policy is to make mineral materials within National Forest lands available to the public and to local, State, and Federal government agencies”.

The CNNF is required to develop strategies for the inventory and management of the mineral material resource to assure an adequate supply for projected demand (R9-Supplement Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2853.1 and Region 9-CNNF Supplement FSM 2850-2016-1).

Implementing this proposal would include analyzing the physical and biological environments in the analysis area, the relationship between the proposal and laws, regulations, and agency policy.

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Participation Requested

At this time the Forest Service is requesting information and other assistance from Federal, State, and local agencies, and other individuals or organizations that have an interest in or could be affected by the proposed action. Specific information is the most useful for the identification of issues and development and analysis of alternatives to the proposal.

The Forest Service is not planning any other public participation other than this request. All persons who provide feedback in response to this request will continue to receive information about this project and will be included in any additional public participation effort that may occur. Those who do not respond will not receive additional information.

Feedback received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who participated, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action. Information submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous feedback will not provide the Agency with the ability to provide the respondent with subsequent environmental documents.

Pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27 (d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied; the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the information may be resubmitted with name and address within 10 days.

This Public Scoping Notice and the project maps are available on the Worldwide Web at:

http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=57446

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