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**THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**

## Resource REVIEW



**LAKE STATES  
RESOURCE  
ALLIANCE, INC.**  
THE MULTIPLE-USE ORGANIZATION

FALL 2010

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### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

From time to time people ask me what and how do we reply to Forest Service Planning or Problems. The following is a letter this year that will give you some idea.

To Whom It May Concern:

The Lake State Resource Alliance is a grass roots organization of individuals and organizations who believe that multiple uses of public lands are vital to the economic well being and enjoyment of Lake States residents. The management of our National Forests, especially in the Lake States is critical to our ability to work, support our communities, and recreate. We have witnessed the various efforts in land management planning on the National Forests over the past few decades and have been disappointed with the lengthy and burdensome process that hand tie the agencies ability to conduct appropriate and science based forest management. It is shocking that after decades of planning and implementation, the National Forests in our region are the only large forest tracts that are not certified, in large part because of a failure to manage the land sustainability. We watch in dismay as forest plans are being implemented at 25-30% of plan levels despite years of planning to address everyone's concerns.

We acknowledge that budgets and staffing is part of the problem but so is a system that rewards those who just want to stop management actions. The availability of an appeal process that allows folks an easy way to prevent management actions but has no consequences for "Monkey wrenching" projects is doom for the failure that currently exists. It certainly is not right when months and even years of analysis by trained professionals is held up for years and years by appeals and litigation with little justification and the only costs are on the taxpayer and local citizens who depend on an economy driven by management activities on local National Forests.

We recommend that any future National Forest planning process reaffirm the principle of sustainable management consistent with the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act and allow rather than overly restrict the large variety of uses of these forest. Our members consist of an important array of stakeholder groups that have repeatedly seen a decline in the public's ability to use these forests. Implementing vast closures of public land to citizens who have paid for and supported these areas is not the way to go.

These National Forests are extremely important to local economies and are often the lifeblood to the existence of local communities. National Forest planning must consider the overall effects of land management decisions on local citizens who shouldn't be penalized in the decision making process for not participating because they are spending most of their time trying to make a living.

Members of the Lake States Resource Alliance understand the difficult position often placed on public land managers that are most often put into an impossible position of trying to implement overly protective forest plans. It is crucial that any analysis of forest plan do a better job of analyzing the consequences of passive management approaches; doing nothing does have a cost and in the long term can have serious impacts. As has become painstakingly obvious with massive insect and disease problems in some of our National Forests, a lack of management has become one of our biggest threats to forests health.

Thank you for allowing us to voice our concerns  
Sincerely, Orv Langohr, President

# National forest habitat work wins out in court case

By Kurt Krueger, Contributing Writer, Wisconsin Outdoor News

U.S. Forest Service officials are celebrating a long-awaited court ruling that has cleared the way for logging on 7,700 acres of national forest land in Forest, Florence and Oconto counties.

Federal Judge Lynn Adelman ruled last month in favor of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and dismissed two cases on the Northwest Howell and McCaslin Vegetation Management projects.

The Northwest Howell project is located 22 miles east of Eagle River in Forest and Florence counties. The McCaslin project is located north of Lakewood in Forest and Oconto counties.

"We were pretty excited when we got the news," said Joel "Harv" Skjerven, district ranger for the Eagle River-Florence Ranger District. "It's the best news in 10 years around here."

Skjerven said the decision will help keep the district's timber program at sustainable levels for the wood products industry.

"It's a message to our employees that all the work and planning was worthwhile," he said. "We always thought it was a good decision and so did our employees."

The Northwest Howell project alone called for six to ten timber sales that, at the time, would have produced 23 million board feet of timber.

Together, the rulings enable the CNNF to move forward on managing vegetation and wildlife habitat on about 16,000 acres of the 1.5 million-acre national forest. Management activities will involve timber harvesting, planting, fish and wildlife habitat improvements, erosion control measures, road work and archeological site evaluations, and interpretations.

Timber harvest delays have not only impacted forest work and the wood industry, but also sports men who rely on healthy populations of deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock and other species that benefit from logging.

Jeanne Higgins, forest supervisor, said Forest Service staff is responsible for managing the forest to assure its sustainability into the future.

"The forest plan...provides a holistic approach for this management. Because we can now proceed with implementing the plan in these project areas, forest health, local economies, and the public in general will benefit," Higgins said.

In fall 2003 and spring 2004, lawsuits were filed against the CNNF alleging a variety of inadequacies with the forest's environmental analysis of these projects. In spring and summer of 2005, Adelman ruled in favor of the Forest Service on all but one item in each lawsuit.

Adelman decided that the cumulative impacts analysis described in the documents for each of the projects lacked sufficient detail to demonstrate that the Forest Service had taken a "hard look" at the effects of past, present and future projects on certain wildlife species, including the red-shouldered hawk and the pine marten.

This "hard look" is required by National Environmental Policy Act regulations. Adelman ordered that the Forest Service not start the projects until the Forest Service's analysis met the requirements of NEPA.

Higgins said forest staff fixed the situation by updating the original environmental impact statements with more descriptive and rigorous analysis, including new models and methods that improve the analysis of cumulative project impacts.

Skjerven said the first timber sales in the Northwest Howell area aren't likely to occur until 2011 because the 2010 action plan is already in place.

"Eight years has passed since the initial assessment work was done. The additional growth will change the volumes and there has been some mortality, though most of it was handled through salvage cuts in spruce stands," Skjerven said.

He said the original decision on the Northwest Howell project was signed by former district ranger E.B. Fitzpatrick in 2003.

After the initial court ruling, he said the Forest Service reissued its decision in 2006 after analyzing the cumulative impacts of logging on sensitive wildlife species.

"Future decisions on ... management plans will in some ways be a takeoff from the ones we've won in court on," Skjerven said. "It's the best information we have on what the courts have determined to be a process that meets federal law."

Skjerven said Adelman made it clear in his decision that it is the Forest Service and not the court that has the expertise to do the environmental assessment.

"The judge identified the agency as the experts on forest management and said his job was to determine if the processes we used followed the law," Skjerven said.

Adelman presides over the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

For more information on these or other Forest Service projects, go to [fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf](http://fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf)

Lake States Resource Alliance, Inc. Website is in the process of being updated. Please, while this is being done, visit us at

*lakestatesresource.org*

You will find info on public lands, how to become a member, how to contact us, how to contact your legislators, and news & events. Our annual fundraiser & newsletter sections are a work in progress.

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