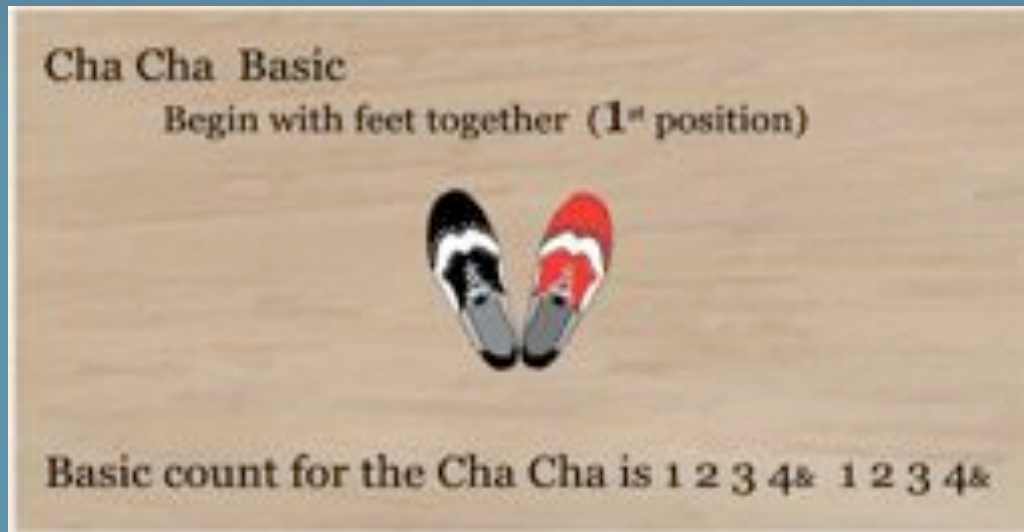


Chippewa Cha-cha

Partnering to Manage Roads and Trails in the Chippewa Area



Jack Olson

Trail Planner

MN Dept. of Natural Resources

19th National Trails Symposium

Little Rock, AR

November 15 – 18, 2008





Chippewa Cha-cha

Partnering to Manage Roads and Trails in the Chippewa Area

- The Ballroom
- The Prom
- The Partners
- The Moves and Missteps
- The Encore

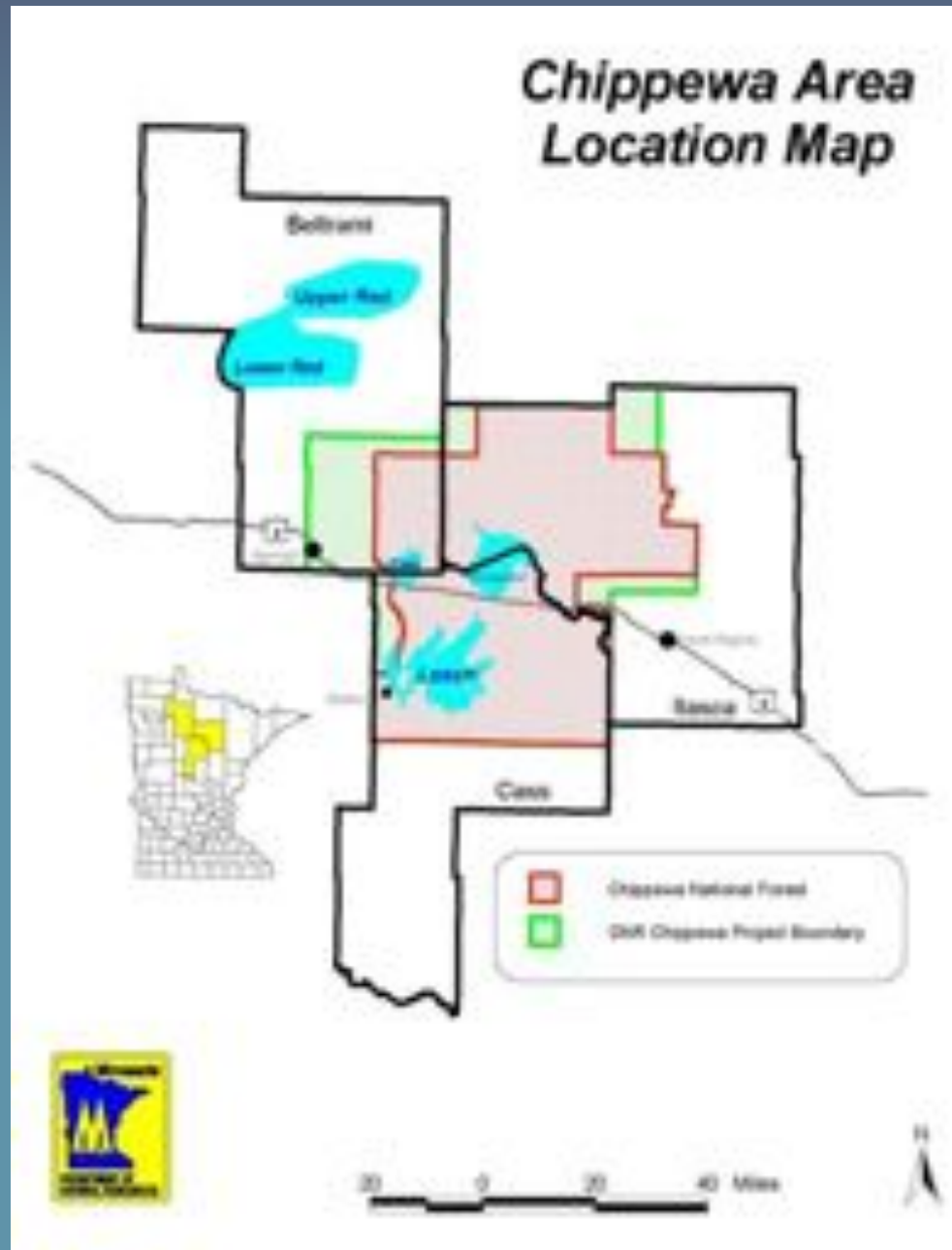


The Ballroom

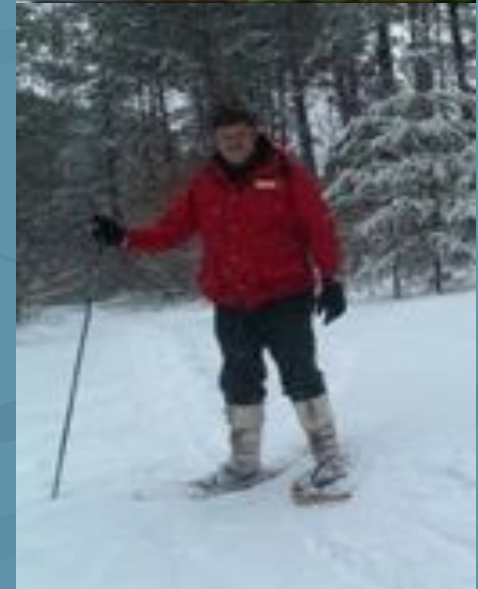
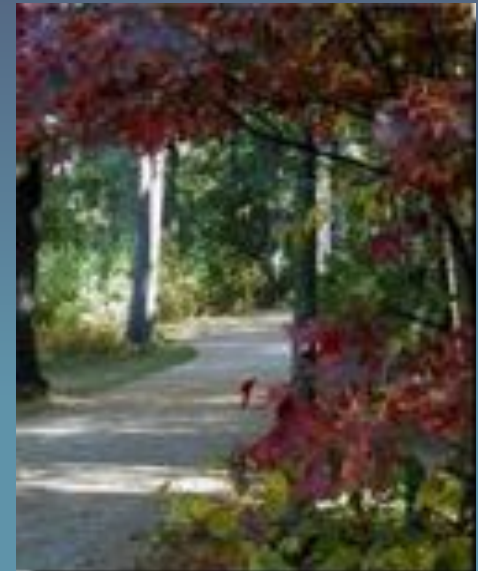
Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota

- 2+ million acres
- Headwaters of the Mississippi River
- Lakes
- 4,000+ miles of roads and trails

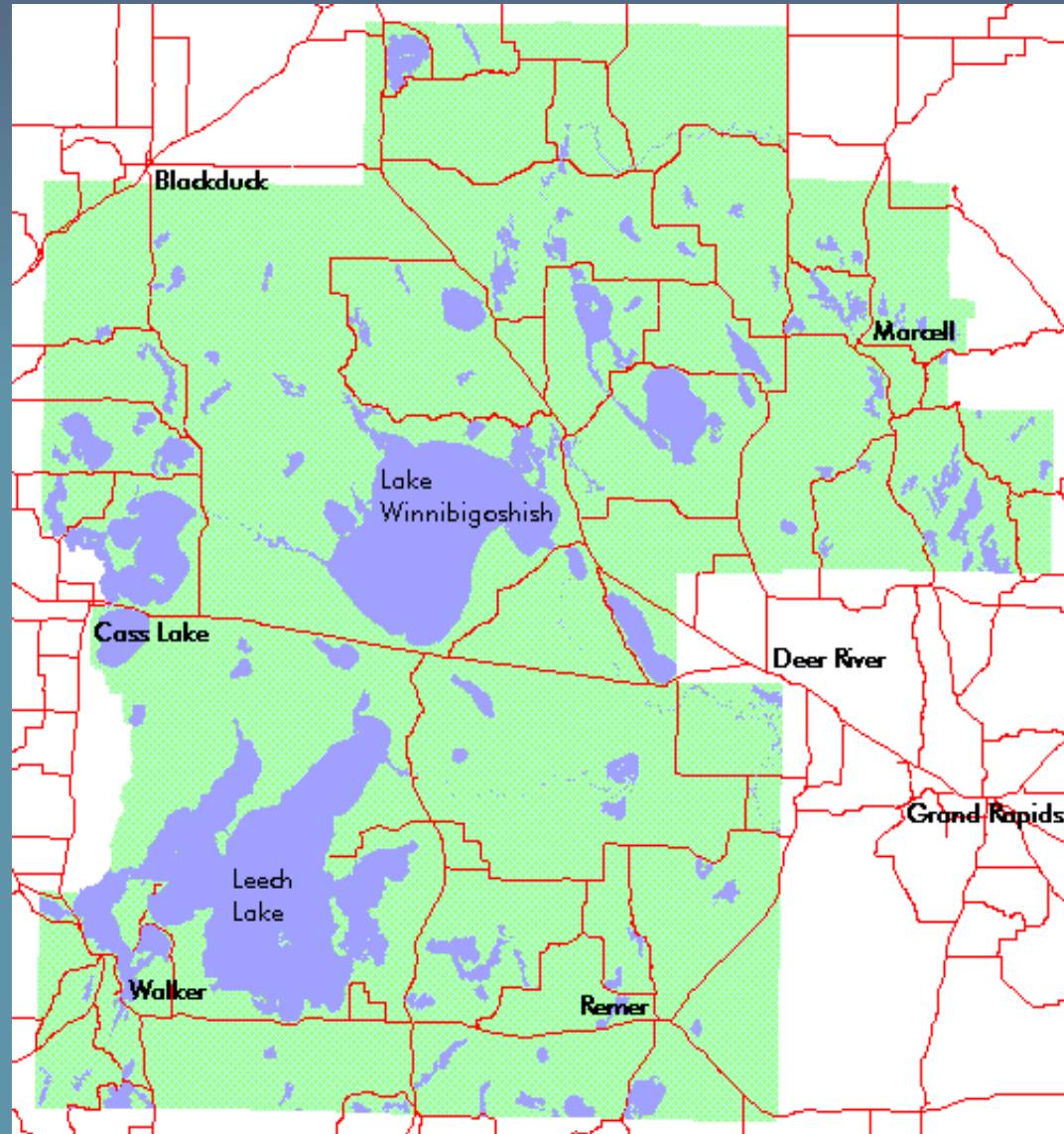
Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota



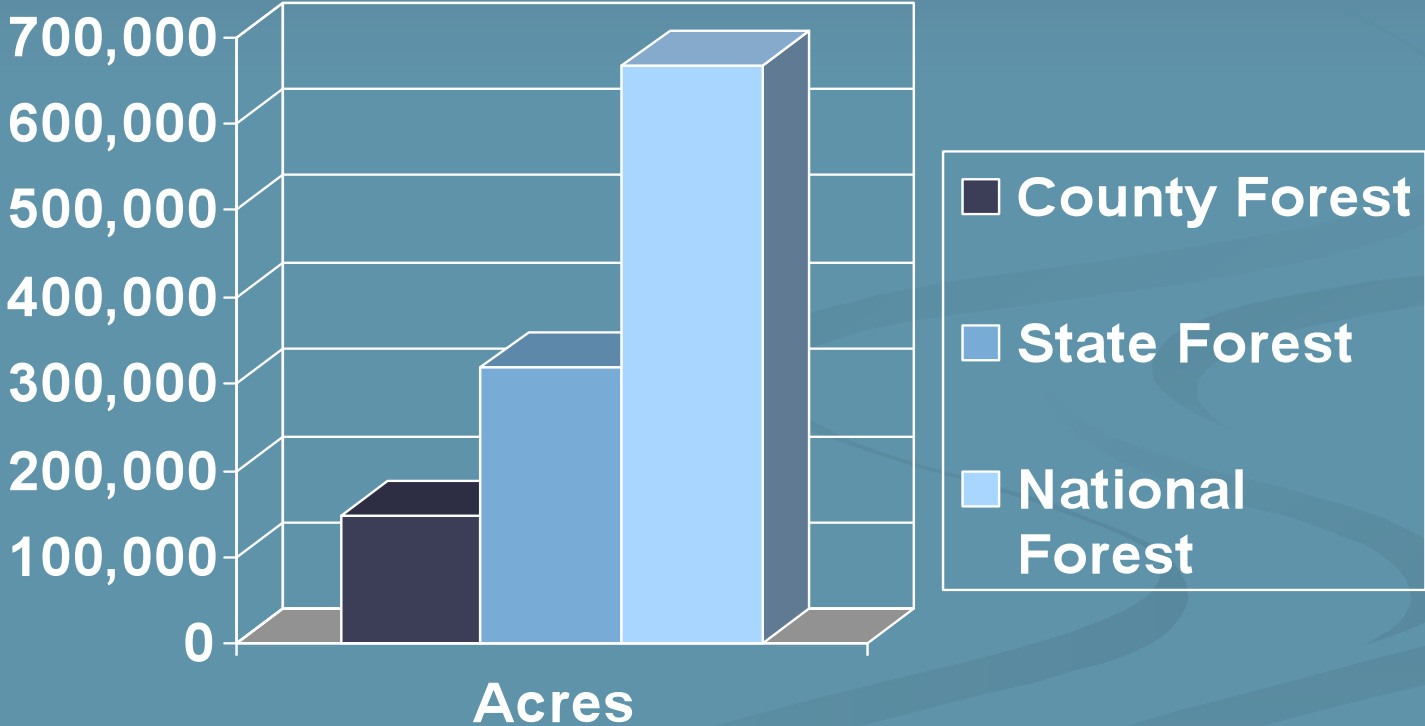
Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota



Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota



Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota



Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota Major Trails



■ North Country National Scenic Trail

- ~ 60 miles in the Chippewa NF
- Hiking and other non-motor uses

■ Heartland and Paul Bunyan State Trails

- ~50 miles in Chippewa Area
- Paved
- Biking, snowmobile, horse



■ Soo Line Trail – North

- ~50 miles in the Chippewa NF
- ATV, snowmobile

Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota

Other Trails



- Mi-gi-zi Bike Trail
 - Paved loop around Pike Bay
- Hiking and Interpretive Trails
 - Often near campgrounds or historic sites
- Hunter Walking Trails
 - Developed in habitat management areas
 - About a dozen locations
 - Fall use by hunters
 - Many also used by x-c skiers and mountain bikers in other seasons

Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota Forest Roads



- Maintained by County, State, and Federal Forestry Agencies

- National Forest Roads ~2,500 miles
- State Forest Roads ~115 miles
- County Forest Roads ~30 miles



- Motor Vehicle Use Policies Vary

- By Agency
- By Vehicle Type (Highway Licensed, ORV)
- By Road Class

Chippewa Area – North Central Minnesota

Other Routes



- Almost 40% of inventoried routes on public forest land and neither forest roads or recreational trails
- May have been created by timber harvest, resource management, or user-developed
- These routes rarely located or designed with public motor vehicle use in mind
- Mileage and location changes due to resource management, use levels, vegetative growth, beaver activity, etc.
- Motor vehicle policy varies widely

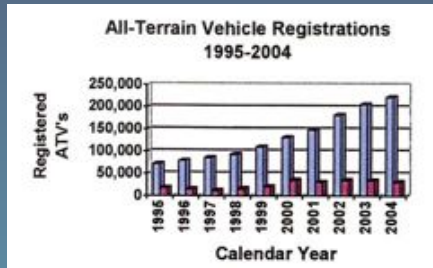


The Prom

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning

- Federal, State, County, Tribal Agencies
- Planning – Oct. 2005 to Nov.2006
- Decisions and Implementation 2007-08

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning



- Rapid growth in ORV registrations
- Increasing ORV use on public forest lands
- Intermingled ownership in the Chippewa area
- Public confusion due to differing legal and policy frameworks

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning

- 2003 Minnesota Legislation
 - Classify all state forest lands for motor vehicle use
 - Designate routes to be managed as Roads or Trails
 - Applies to county-managed land within state forests
 - Complete on 4+ million acres by December 2008
- 2005 US Forest Service Travel Management Rule
 - Designated routes for use by vehicle type and time of year
 - Motor Vehicle Use Map
 - Chippewa project specifically addressed ORVs, not highway vehicles



Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning



■ Project Goals

- Designate routes where motor vehicle use is allowed and sustainable

- Eliminate vehicle use on routes with high impacts
 - Erosion or rutting
 - Sedimentation of surface waters
 - Previously designated non-motorized trails and areas

- Reduce confusion due to differing rules and policies





The Partners

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning

- US Forest Service – Chippewa National Forest
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Beltrami, Cass, Itasca Counties
- Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
- Chippewa Area Residents and Minnesota Citizens

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning





The Moves

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning

- Collaborative Approach
- Meaningful Public Involvement
- Geographic Information System

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning



■ Collaboration

- Management Level Steering Group
- Staff Level Work Groups
- Joint Work Sessions



Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning

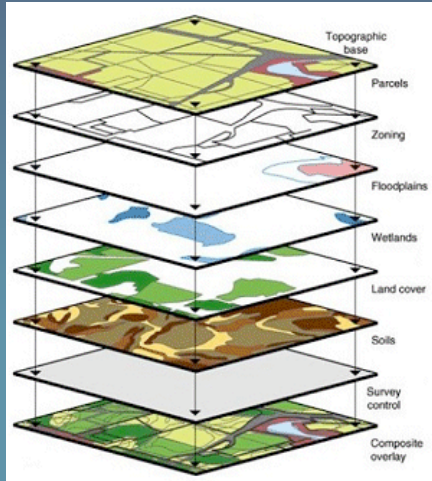


■ Public Involvement

- 5 Pre-planning Open Houses Jan. 2006
- Interagency Newsletters
- 3 Public Review Meetings Oct. 2006
- Response to Comments



Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning



■ Geographic Information System

- Inventory from all agencies
- Single Route File
- Use DNR Designation Tool
- Export to Agency Systems





The Missteps

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning

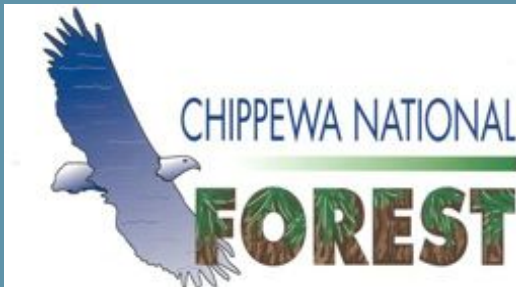
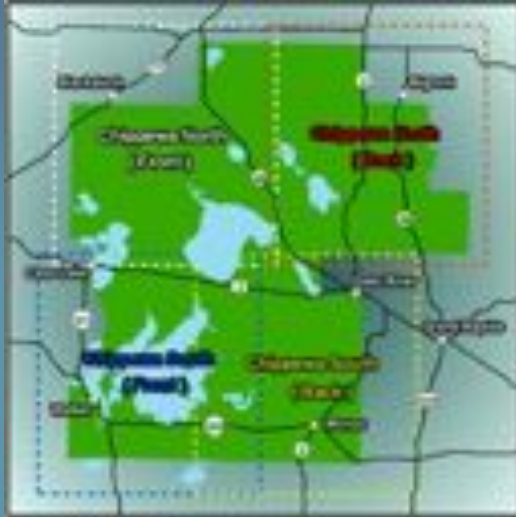
- No updating of route designation database
- Still no interagency user map
- Limited public education effort

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning



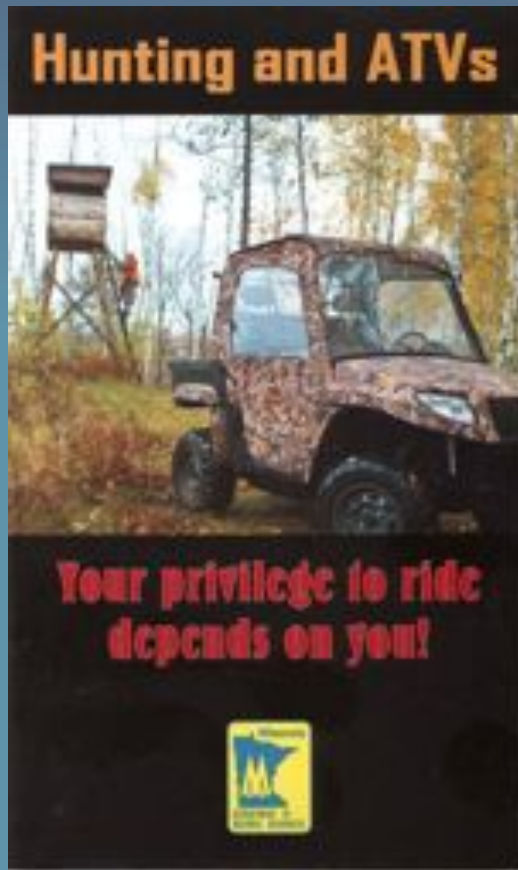
- Route Designation Database
 - Reversion to agency operational systems
 - Needed for interagency user maps
 - Follow-up on easement and jurisdiction questions

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning



- Interagency User Map
 - Single map showing motor vehicle routes on all public forest lands
 - Expected based on current snowmobile system maps
 - Useful for trip planning, Trail Ambassadors, Law Enforcement

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning



- Ongoing Public Education
 - Some single agency efforts
 - Continue discussion of acceptable and unacceptable uses and impacts
 - Reduce confusion about rules

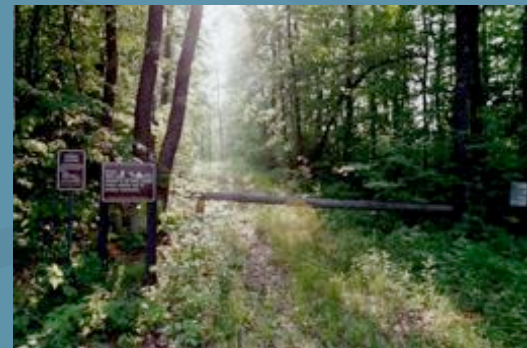
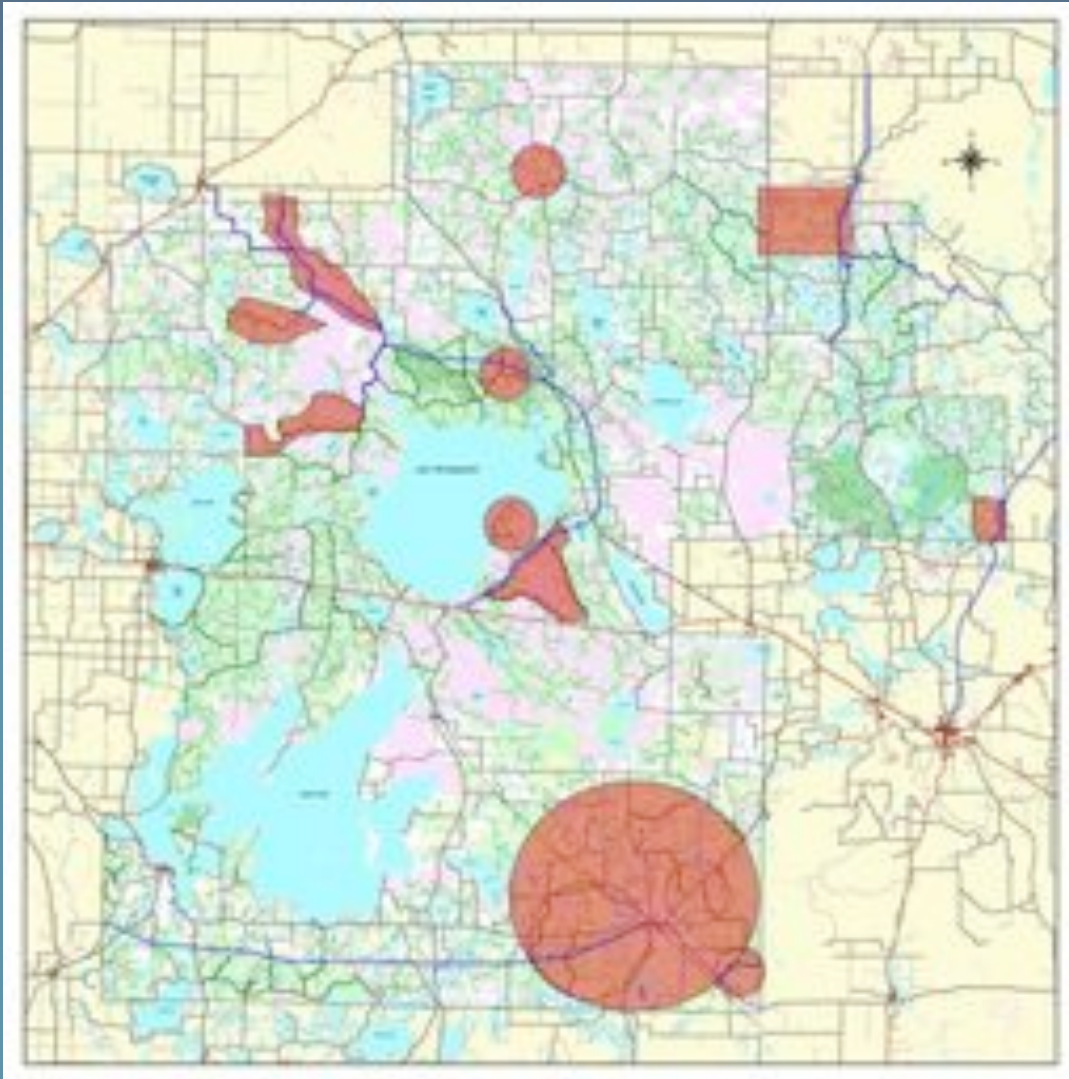


The Encore

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning

- Planning for longer distance, interconnected ORV trails
- Addressing hunting and utilitarian uses of ATVs on public forest lands
- Monitoring use and managing trails

Chippewa Interagency Travel Management Planning



jack.olson@dnr.state.mn.us

218-833-8716

mndnr.gov

