



News Release Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

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Contact: Cathy Fox, 715-362-1362

Firewood gathering restricted on federal lands in Lakewood and Mountain areas

Park Falls and Rhinelander, Wis. – June 13, 2007 – Lakewood-Laona District Ranger Larry Sandoval on the Chequamegon-Nicolet NF announced today that gathering firewood in certain areas impacted by last Thursday's tornado will not be permitted. This applies to individuals with firewood permits and those gathering incidental amounts of firewood without a permit for campfires. It takes effect immediately.

“No firewood cutting” signs have been posted in two locations. The first is a section along State Road 64, beginning approximately 2 ½ miles west of State Road 32 and ending approximately one mile east of County Highway T. The second area is along County Highway T from the intersection of the area impacted by the tornado (approximately 1 mile south of Hwy 64) to just south of Old Graves Road (Forest Road 2317). The Oconto River Barrier Free Access area, also along County Highway T, is closed due to numerous hazardous conditions caused by fallen timber. Parking along County Highway T to gather firewood is not allowed.

All points along the impacted area through Highway 64 and Old Graves Road are closed for public safety considerations and because active timber sale areas were impacted by the storm. Trees within these timber sale areas have been previously purchased and cannot be cut or removed by anyone except the purchaser.

Firewood cutting and gathering on side roads off of County Highway T and east of Highway 32 is allowed in portions of the area impacted by the tornado. Permits and maps of firewood cutting areas may be obtained at the District offices in Lakewood and Laona.

A ban on the collection of oak firewood across two quarantine areas also remains in effect. The south quarantine area is bordered by Hay Creek Road to the north, Riverview Road and the power line corridor to the south, Flower Lake Road to the east (at the Marinette County line), and Sunrise Lake and Mc Cauley Creek Road to the west. The north quarantine area is bordered by County Highway F to the north and west, Smyth and Buck's Ranch Road to the south, and North Fork Road to the east. Bright yellow warning signs are posted around the perimeter of the areas.

“We want to remind people of the extremely dangerous nature of downed timber if they are cutting firewood in other areas affected by the tornado” said Sandoval. “Trees blown down by high winds are under tension and heavily compacted. Kick-back when sawing can happen very easily and cause injury to even the most experienced chain saw operator.”

More information on this F3 tornado that moved through the area will be available at the Forest web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf