

Chippewa National Forest



Annual Report 2007

Water, Climate, More Kids in the Woods

Comments by Abigail R. Kimbell, Forest Service Chief

In my travels and discussions this year, three themes in particular have stood out: climate change; water issues; and the loss of a connection to nature, especially for kids. History will judge the conservation leaders of our age, including our own leadership in the Forest Service, by how well we respond to these challenges. These are not new topics for us, but they offer a context to build upon or within.

Climate change can have significant impacts to the lands we manage and is in the news everywhere. The Forest Service manages National Forests and Grasslands to provide the needs of today and for future generations to sustain their diversity and productivity. We have developed materials to help you better understand climate change from both a global and local perspective. Forest Service researchers have studied the impacts of climate change and air pollutants on forests and grasslands over thirty years. This research already identifies trends and subsequent effects to ecosystems across the United States. We are developing a national framework for guiding and directing land management activities in light of expected changes. In some landscapes, the changes in management will be significant, based on anticipated regional and local effects of a changing climate.

We will also focus on **water**. Climate change has been linked to declining snow packs, retreating glaciers, and changing patterns of precipitation and runoff. The evidence shows that we are entering a period of water scarcity not seen in our history. The national forests were created in part for “securing favorable conditions of water flows,” the importance of which has grown as populations have grown. The Forest Service can make a difference by managing vegetation to restore ecological processes and functions, including the recharging of streams and aquifers.

The third focus area is **reconnecting people, especially kids, with nature**. The challenges associated with climate change and water will not be resolved in a few years. It will take generations. Kids must understand why forests are so valuable so they will grow into citizens who support conservation. Building on the Forest Service traditions of conservation education, we will work with partners to ensure that American children have the opportunity to experience the great outdoors, whether it is a remote mountain wilderness or a spot of nature in the heart of a city.

It is important to remember two key things: first, many of the tools and approaches we have used to accomplish our land management objectives will continue. In particular, forest health restoration, open space, managing recreation and invasive species will still serve as a way of focusing and prioritizing our work. Second, strong community relationships, partnerships, and collaborative work will be more important than ever in delivering the Forest Service Mission. The Forest Service has always risen to the great conservation challenges, and I am confident that we will continue to do so. Thank you for working safely and steadily to accomplish our mission.

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From the Forest Supervisor Chippewa National Forest Marks 100 Years

2008 is the Centennial Year for the Chippewa National Forest. In 1908, what was the Minnesota Forest Reserve became part of the National Forest system. On May 23, 2008, we will be marking the day the Reserve was officially transferred to the Department of Agriculture and became a National Forest. Marking one hundred years seems a simple enough idea, but for a National Forest it probably depends on who you are and your history with the land.

The Chippewa National Forest remains unique among this Country's national forests by virtue of our relationship with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. No where else in the country does 'on reservation' also mean on the National Forest. The Leech Lake Reservation encompasses over 40% of the Chippewa National Forest. Managing the National Forest means honoring diverse local values to build an effective and respectful government-to-government relationship with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.

As I look back on the accomplishments of the past year, partnerships with Leech Lake Band stand out. The National Forest and the Leech Lake Band agreed to focus tribal relations on emphasizing outreach and recruitment, partnerships, cultural exchange and developing an MOU. A cooperative agreement in July 2007 to clean illegal waste sites in key riparian areas led to a partnership between the Leech Lake Public Works Department and Chippewa National Forest Soil and Water programs. In 2007, district rangers made it a priority to participate in Local Indian Council monthly meetings. We continue the 20-year Boy River prescribed burn partnership project, which also received a National "Wings Across the Americas" award in March for Habitat Management partnerships. There are cooperative efforts in fisheries, law enforcement, heritage and wildlife programs, including the first stewardship contract with Leech Lake Band.

Regardless of your heritage it is not hard to appreciate the wonder and value of the Chippewa National Forest. The importance of National Forests will grow as emerging environmental issues and social concerns increase. National Forests provide clean water, sequester carbon, supply biomass for alternative energy, and serve as reserves for biodiversity. In last century we have created a treasure in the Chippewa National Forest. In the century to come, the value of this treasure will only increase. The land itself holds stories through history. Those stories can still be experienced today by visiting sites like the old Cut Foot Sioux Ranger Station, Camp Rabideau and Stony Point campground.

This Centennial provides an opportunity to tell the story, look back on how the Chippewa National Forest was built. As you read this year's stories and accomplishments, I ask that you also look forward to the potential of the next 100 years. How might we work together to ensure that future? Until then enjoy your National Forest this Centennial year.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert M. Harper".



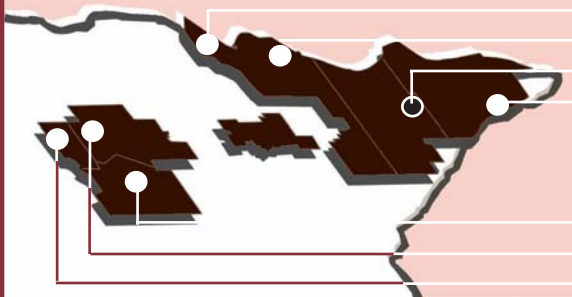
*Chippewa National Forest Supervisor
Rob Harper*



Payments to Counties

Seven Minnesota counties received a total of \$5,455,938 from the Forest Service in 2007. These payments, called the 25% fund, Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Thye-Blatnik, are based on a formula of total Forest revenues, acres of National Forest and population within the counties. These funds have provided revenues to counties to compensate for the lost tax base of federal lands since 1922.

Congress passed the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act in 2000, allowing counties a choice in receiving payments that were implemented in 2001. Itasca, Cass and Lake Counties chose a stable payment until 2006. In 2006, Congress extended the payment schedule for one year. Beltrami County and Koochiching, St. Louis and Cook Counties decided to continue receiving 25% of Forest revenues. Unless congress extends the Secure Rural Schools Act, payments for 2008 are expected to be 25% of gross receipts.



SUPERIOR	PILT	Thye-Blatnik	25% Fund	TOTAL
Cook	\$128,274	\$704,250	183,690	1,016,214
Koochiching	\$5,989	0	112	6,101
Lake	\$147,181	887,250	183,996	1,218,427
St. Louis	\$758,547	510,000	249,979	1,518,526
CHIPPEWA	PILT	Thye-Blatnik	25% Fund	TOTAL
Cass	\$205,869	NA	\$549,068	\$754,937
Itasca	\$223,917	NA	\$587,494	\$811,411
Beltrami	\$71,587	NA	\$58,735	\$130,322

2007 Accomplishments

TIMBER

Harvested (Million Board Feet).....	21,410
Reforestation (Acres).....	2,047
Timber Stand Improve (Acres).....	1,772
Fuelwood Permits.....	219
Christmas Tree Permits.....	169
Bough Permits.....	35

HUMAN RESOURCES

Senior Employment.....	14
Volunteers.....	55
Youth Conservation Corps/MCC.....	8
Full Time Employees.....	128
Visitor Centers.....	12,570
Seasonal/Temp Employees.....	60

FIRE and FUELS

Prescribed Burns (Acres).....	1,131
Wildfires (#Fires/Acres).....	42/46
Hazardous Fuel Reduced (Acres).....	3,504
Hazardous Fuels (non-WFHF Acres).....	4,263

WILDLIFE/FISHERIES

Terrestrial Habitat Restored/Enhanced (Acres).....	500
Noxious Weed Treatment (Acres).....	96.5
Inland Streams Enhanced/Restored (Miles).....	2
Inland Lakes Enhanced/Restored (Acres).....	15
Soil Water Resource Improved (Acres).....	25
Terrestrial Ecological Units (Acres).....	15,000

LANDS

Right-Of-Way Cases.....	1
Special Use Permits (Total).....	50
Land Acquisition (Acres).....	1
Mineral Permits (Issued).....	30
Total Nat'l Forest Acres.....	666,622
Total Acres Within Boundary.....	1,599,611
Boundary Management.....	18.75

ROADS AND TRAILS

Road Maintenance (Miles).....	320
Road Improved (Miles).....	14
Road Decommissioned (Miles).....	1.1
Total Road System Miles.....	2,349
Trails Maintained to Standard (Miles).....	186



Keeping Kitchi Creek Rolling

Chippewa National Employees gather together annually for many interesting projects. From garlic mustard picking to recreation area cleanups, the groups work together to keep the Forest moving forward. On May 15, Chippewa National Forest employees joined together for the annual “Riparian Planting Day” on the Blackduck Ranger District.

Employees planted 4500 red pine, white pine, white spruce, balsam fir and mountain ash along the shore of Rice Lake and Kitchi Lake. The hope is that these long-lived conifers will enhance the health of the lakes and the connected Kitchi Creek. Blackduck District staff began prepping the site in the winter when the ground was frozen. Four acres of dry hazel, moist speckled alder, and wetter willow were shredded, a low impact treatment which made the spring planting go very smooth.

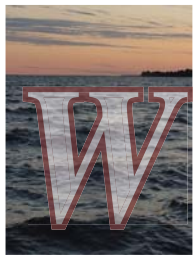
On “Riparian Planting Day”, seedlings were planted thick to account for heavy deer browse. At the end of the long day, the crew knew these seedlings improve water quality, reduce beaver forage, and help keep Kitchi Creek free flowing for fish spawning and sensitive mussel dispersal. White pines planted near the lake will hopefully someday provide perches and nest sites for eagles. Roll on, Kitchi Creek!



Seedlings are unloaded along the shores of Kitchi Creek.



Planting along the shores helps improve water quality.



Water Bug Run

Along with miles of stream habitat improvement and 15 acres of lake improvement accomplished, the fisheries program completed the Aquatic Organism Passage project. Four new stream culverts were placed at road stream crossings along tributaries to the Mississippi River to allow passage for aquatic organisms. The 2007 project strengthened partnerships with three counties, who have developed proposals with the Chippewa National Forest for projects in 2008.



New culverts allow aquatic critters to easily pass under road/stream crossings.

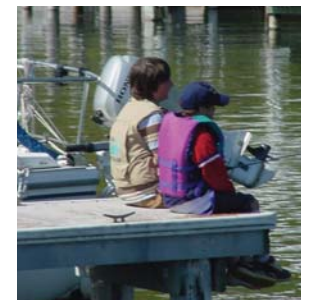


Governor's Fishing Opener

The 2007 Governor's Fishing Opener was held in Walker, MN on the shores of Leech Lake in May. The Forest Service had great fun partnering for this huge annual Minnesota event.

The Chippewa National Forest participated in the Community Picnic, featuring a booth on loons and lead fishing tackle, More Kids in the Woods and Firewise. Forest employee Luke Rutten even provided music with his Lonely Bogstompers. Forest employees led bird and wildflower hikes to showcase forest resources, and helped with the MinnAqua kids fishing event. A fantastic weekend, along with lasting partnerships and even a few walleye, made the Governor's Fishing Opener a memorable event in 2007!

Photos to right: Chippewa National Forest employees participated in many of the Governor's Fishing Opener events, including bird hikes, community picnics, musical entertainment and MinnAqua fishing activities for kids.



Minnesota Conservation Award



Rob Harper, center, accepts the Minnesota Conservation Award from Governor Tim Pawlenty (right).

Forest Supervisor Rob Harper accepted the Minnesota Conservation Award for the Chippewa National Forest from Governor Tim Pawlenty and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Mark Holsten.

The award recognized the 2001 land acquisition of the former Cedar Springs Resort property on Leech Lake. Partners who worked with the Chippewa including the Marion Family, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Cass County, and the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation were also recognized by the Governor and the Commissioner.

The work to bring this property into public ownership is an accomplishment that benefits not only aquatic resources and the muskie fishery, but all who enjoy the Chippewa National Forest



Keeping Track of the Cold 100 years of Weather Records!

Here in northern Minnesota, many people use the adage “if you don’t like the weather, just wait a few moments”. On the Chippewa National Forest, we can actually research that statement. In October 2007, the National Weather Service and NOAA recognized Chippewa National Forest for 100 years of weather observation. One hundred years of accessible weather records, faithfully observed and recorded every day by Forest Service employees in Cass Lake, Minnesota since 1907.

National Weather Service Program Leader Steve Gohde noted “the Forest has consistently provided error free data through the years, and the length of service is remarkable.”

As we focus on topics such as climate change, water, More Kids in the Woods and the Chippewa National Forest Centennial, one hundred years of weather data is an amazing resource. For instance, as I write this article, the temperature is a bone chilling -25 below zero. We can look back and see that on January 30, 1908, the temperature in Cass Lake at the Forest Supervisor’s office was -17 degrees below. Another beautiful day on the Forest.

Weather data can also help to pinpoint our notable historic events. In a Forest publication about Camp Rabideau, a CCC camp near Cass Lake, it is noted that the original CCC crew moved to the site in January 1936 in -42 degree temps to start construction of the camp. The actual date



Rob Harper and Gary Brama (left) accept an award from National Weather Service officials Steve Gohde and Mike Stewart.

can be verified by looking again at the records. On January 22, 1936 the temperature in Cass Lake was -42 degrees below zero. The next day it was even colder, -45 degrees below. Not a pleasant weekend for the CCC crew.

National Weather Service records observed on the Forest include daily and monthly temperatures, precipitation and storm events. The Walker Ranger Station has also recorded weather observations since 1939, another notable achievement. The Walker District was also awarded a certificate of accomplishment for their many years of weather observation. The database is accessible through the University of Minnesota at ww.comate.umn.edu/doc/historical.htm. Congratulations to our current and past weather data collectors on the Forest for a “historical” job well done!



January Fires

The Anderson Cove fire on Leech Lake January 2007 should have been the first hint that the fire season was going to be different. Lack of snow cover played a role in this rare winter wildfire, and extreme drought continued to play a role in the 2007 fire season.

Chippewa National Forest fire crews were called to 42 wildfires this year on Forest. The largest effort off-Forest was the Superior National Forest fires in May 2007. Firefighters were also called to Colorado, South



Anderson Cove Fire, January 2007

Dakota, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Oklahoma, and Wyoming.



ore Kids in the Woods Wolves in the Woods

In this Centennial year for the Chippewa National Forest, getting kids into the woods and helping them establish lifelong connections to natural and cultural resources is key to the future. In 2007, the Forest received a Hands on the Land grant to fund a program called “Wolves in the Woods”. Named for the Walker-Hackensack-Akeley school wolf mascot, the grant provides funding to the school district to pay for bus transportation and materials to get more kids in the woods. This project is about healthy lifestyle activities, mentoring students to become conservation leaders, and teaching students to care for and teach others about the natural and cultural resources in northern Minnesota.

In the fall and winter of 2007, “Wolves in the Woods” brought students to local favorites like Shingobee Hills, and, for the first time, to the big pines of the Lost 40. Programs are offered during the school day, but after-school and weekend family activities are offered through Community Education. The program has not only connected students to the National Forest, but administrators and teachers to local natural resource agencies and staff. Field trips are held on Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife, State Parks and Army Corps of Engineers lands. And the kids are outside and having fun. The partnership continues into the school year, with more outdoor field trips planned with our outstanding partners.



Students from the Walker Hackensack Akeley school were out in the woods at Shingobee Hills, Lost 40 and all across the Chippewa National Forest thanks to a Hands on the Land grant.



ore Families in the Woods National Passes Updated

America the Beautiful –
Federal Recreational Lands Pass.

The Forest Service is a partner in the America The Beautiful Interagency Pass Program which was created by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act and authorized by Congress in December 2004. Participating agencies include the National Park Service, Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation.

In 2007, the Chippewa National Forest sold 217 Senior Passes and 5 Annual Passes. The Forest also provided 50 Access passes and had 26 Forest volunteers qualify for Volunteer passes. A great year for getting more families into the woods!



Ask about Annual, Senior and Access passes at any National Forest office or Visitor Center.





Students and Summer Science

A few years ago, a number of enterprising educators approached the Chippewa National Forest with the hope of tying together their summer alternative learning program with resource activities on the Forest. It only took a short time to connect the adventurous teens with the area lakes and some of our more exotic inhabitants.

Summer 2007 marked the 8th year of the cooperative agreement with the Cass Lake Area Learning Center and the Forest's fisheries program in tracking the non-native Rusty crayfish. Not only are the students learning to handle the aggressive crustaceans, but they are learning a bit about research, statistics, and ecosystems from the Forest Fisheries Biologist. As they learn about crayfish, they also are learning to work together as a team, and put some faces to the Forest Service logo they see so often around town.

The students spend two weeks each summer setting traps on Cass Lake and four other connected lakes to determine how quickly the Rusty crayfish are moving into the system. Over the past years, they have seen a slow but determined growth of Rusty crayfish reaching into the chain of lakes around Cass Lake, and a marked spread of these aquatic invasives in lakes such as Leech Lake.

Rusty crayfish are noticeably larger and more aggressive than the native *Virilis* species found here. They have a rusty patch on the sides of the bodies, and have black-tipped claws. The Rusties are a threat to native populations as they out-compete for food and habitat.

The students collect the Rusties and native crayfish from their traps, measure and weigh the individuals and release the native crayfish back to the lake. The Rusties are kept for sample specimens and for education programs.

Once the collecting is complete, the education effort goes full circle, with the student's presenting their results at a Norway Beach Visitor Center program. Visitors are often fascinated to see the various crayfish, and the crayfish stages. The students do a great job talking about crayfish to the young campers.

Each year, the search for Rusty crayfish will expand and hopefully include more students. The students get biology field work experience and better understanding of the aquatic world around them. The Forest gains much needed information on the spread of a specific exotic, and perhaps, in the future, a source for qualified biologists or environmental educators to hire!



Students from the Cass Lake Area Learning Center present a program at the Norway Beach Visitor Center about their summer crayfish research project.

Russell and Ruth Michalek work with their horse team at the Norway Beach Recreation Area.



Keeping Norway Beach Healthy

For campers, a large part of the Norway Beach “experience” is the tall Norway, or red, pines that tower over the campsites. Located four miles east of Cass Lake, the Norway Beach Recreation Area is one of the more popular campgrounds on the Forest.

Norway Beach is considered an older forest and falls under specific recreation and aesthetic objectives within our new Chippewa National Forest plan. Management here creates a unique challenge because conditions for the big tree stands have changed as the recreation site grew. Pines had become dense stands, which put them at larger risk for insect and disease outbreaks as well as risk of wildfire. In 2005, Forest managers walked through Norway Beach and became concerned about the lack of pine seedlings. There are many pines over 150 years old, and in a 50 year age class, but very few seedlings. In that condition, dense stands and brush made for too much shading and less seed success.

A decision was made to thin the stand, providing more seedbeds, creating areas for viable seeds and

future big trees. Thinning the dense stands also helps individual trees increase diameter growth--- meaning bigger red pines for campers to wrap their arms around. Work began in the winter 2006-2007, using both high tech logging equipment and traditional logging methods. Some of the 70-acre timber cut was done using horse logging. Russell and Ruth Michalek brought their team of draft horses in to harvest some of the Norway Beach pine. Campground staff provided opportunities for winter visitors to witness a bit of history at the horse logging site! Another area was logged using high tech equipment that minimized soil disturbance.

In July, crews from the Minnesota Conservation Corps cleared slash piles and worked on signs along the trail. Through the summer, the Norway Beach naturalist led hikes along the trail to talk about logging the site and comparing the high tech and traditional horse logging methods. We hope you’ll visit the trail soon, keeping an eye open for the seedlings....future big pines of Norway Beach!



Bringing Back the Elms

If you were living in Minnesota in the 1970's, you will remember the devastating loss of American Elm trees across the state due to Dutch Elm Disease (DED). We remember the orange "x" on the neighborhood trees, a mark that meant the tree was infected and would be brought down. The Chippewa National Forest did not escape the reach of Dutch Elm... one of the greatest losses of trees was in the Stony Point area. Campers at Stony Point on Leech Lake can still find the huge stumps that were once tall strong American elms.

Today, there is new hope. Research initiated in the 1930's to identify DED tolerance has led to disease tolerant trees today. These trees, called cultivars, possess natural tolerance to Dutch Elm Disease. Since the cultivars known to possess DED tolerance are all from latitudes considerably south of the Forest, cold hardiness is a concern for establishing tolerant trees on the Chippewa National Forest. In 2007, surviving American elm trees were identified on the Forest. In February 2008, branches from those elms were sent in for the first phase of the American elm restoration project. These branches were forced to flower in a lab. The pollen was collected from those flowers and will be used to pollinate tolerant American elm cultivars growing at the Forest Service research station in Delaware, OH. This will take place in mid-April. The seed produced will be used to grow 1,000 seedlings that will be planted on the Chippewa in the spring of 2009.



Forest employees searched the Forest for large elm trees as part of an effort to grow Dutch Elm Disease tolerant American elms.



Each Chippewa National Forest ranger district will have a one acre plot where these American elm seedlings will be grown. Here they will be tested for both DED tolerance and cold hardiness. Those that survive both challenges will be used to strengthen DED tolerance in the American elm population across the landscape of the Forest. As we cross into our Centennial year, there is hope once again that the American Elm will thrive on the Chippewa National Forest.

Campfire Notes

When you are out camping with your family, there is nothing so lovely as sitting by the campfire at night. What might not be as nice is the threat of Emerald Ash Borer that could be hiding in your campfire wood. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an invasive insect that kills ash trees. Minnesota has the third largest amount of ash trees in the country, and EAB is a huge threat to this important resource.



Though EAB has not yet been detected in our state, Michigan and Illinois have been hit. In order to protect Minnesota forests, there is a ban on all out-of-state firewood in the National Forest. State Forests have even stricter bans on firewood, and ask that people purchase their firewood only at the park or with a local vendor.

It's a small but very important way you can help protect the forest and enjoy a perfect roasted marshmallow all at the same time. For more information on EAB, go online at www.emeraldashborer.info

Heritage Day



On June 21, the Chippewa National Forest held its first Heritage Day celebration, hosted by the Forest's new Multicultural Team. The day was developed to explore the cultural diversity of the community and Forest employees, as well as the cultural history that helped shape the area we now call the Chippewa National Forest.

Wayne LaDuke, Mayor of Cass Lake, and George Goggleye, Tribal Chairman of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, both spoke about growing up in the area and challenges that both Native Americans and white people face today. Both talked of working together to make the Cass Lake area a better place to live for all.

In the afternoon, several employees spoke about their heritage, and the day finished with a drum and dance demonstration by members of the Leech Lake Band. The dance was done by young girls who learned the dances from the elders of the tribe and their dresses were made with help from mothers and aunts. Dances were a fancy shawl dance and a jingle dance. Drummers did a intertribal dance and a travel dance and Forest employees were invited to join in. Heritage Day 2008 is already being planned in conjunction with the Forest Centennial.

Forest Centennial Events



The Chippewa National Forest marks 100 years in 2008. Events are scheduled throughout the year—we hope you can join us at some of our favorite historic sites. Mark your calendar for these upcoming summer events!

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| May 19-23 | Centennial Open House Events Across Forest |
| May 24 | Norway Beach Centennial Open House |
| June | CCC Trail Sign Dedication, Cut Foot Sioux |
| June 7 | National Trails Day Hike, Norway Beach |
| June 14 | Nat'l Get Outdoors Day Event, Norway Beach |
| June 14 | Bigfork Wilderness/ Centennial Celebration Event |
| June-Aug | Rabideau Wednesdays, Programs at the CCC camp |
| June 28-July 6 | Centennial Programs & Artist Week at Norway Beach |
| July | Historic Cut Foot Sioux Ranger Station Programs |
| July 19 | Bald Eagle Day at Cut Foot Sioux and Norway Beach |
| Aug 6-9 | Smokey Bear's Birthday Party at Cut Foot Sioux, Norway Beach and Marcell |
| Aug 30 | Theodore Roosevelt Living History Program |

The Norway Beach Recreation Area is located 4 miles east of Cass Lake, MN, off Highway 2. The Cut Foot Sioux Visitor Center is located 17 miles north of Deer River Minnesota off Highway 46. Camp Rabideau is located just 7 miles south of Blackduck, MN on Co. 39.

-----For additional information, complete and return the information request form-----

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reservoir Study (ROPE) | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping | <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Map \$9.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ORV Information | <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> Rec Map \$9.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passport in Time Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Biking | <input type="checkbox"/> Mini NF Map (free) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing | <input type="checkbox"/> LSIA Catalog (Books) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FireWise Tips | <input type="checkbox"/> Eagle Viewing | <input type="checkbox"/> Lost 40 Trail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Native Invasives | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Wildflowers | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Ranger Program |

Name: _____

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