



## News Release Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Receives Favorable Ruling on Timber Project**

**Rhineland, WI March 23, 2009** – Federal Judge Lynn Adelman, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, ruled in favor of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF) and dismissed a court case involving the Fishbone Vegetation Project. This ruling allows the CNNF to move forward on actively managing approximately 6,000 acres of oak, red pine and aspen. The Fishbone vegetation project is located 6 miles east of Iron River, Wisconsin on the Washburn District. Earlier this year Judge Adelman dismissed the Twenty- Mile Vegetation Management Project court case, making this the second favorable ruling for the Forest Service from the same court.

The Fishbone project was appealed in August 2007 by the Habitat Education Center of Madison, WI and the Environmental Law and Policy Center of Chicago, IL. Judge Lynn Adelman held oral arguments on the case in January 2009 resulting in the ruling in the favor of the CNNF.

One of the purposes of the Fishbone project is to restore the forest health and improve the economic value in red pine as well as older oak and aspen stands. A tool to accomplish this is the use of timber harvesting. This process improves the growth of residual trees in the red pine stands by reducing competition. In mature oak and aspen stands, the purpose is to regenerate them and to create a new age class of young, vigorous stands. Another purpose of the project is to restore “pocket barrens” communities of small pine barrens habitat interspersed within the forested landscape.

“This is good news for the Forest Service and continues to affirm that our scientific approach is sound. The forest health, local economies and the public in general will be beneficiaries of this ruling.” said Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Supervisor, Jeanne Higgins.

The CNNF revised its Forest Plan in 2004. The Plan is the framework that provides a holistic approach to forest management. All vegetation projects address resource and public concerns as well as moves the Forest closer to the desired condition as outlined in the Forest Plan. The CNNF has the responsibility to manage the forest to assure it will be sustainable into the future. This favorable ruling allows the CNNF to begin implementing the Forest Plan for that area of the Forest.

The CNNF expects to offer several timber sales from the Fishbone project area. For more information or to view the Environmental Analysis for this or other projects visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/cnnf/>

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