

Variance Amendment

Property Name: Flambeau River State Forest

Date the Current Master Plan Approved: September 2010

Proposed Change to the Master Plan:

This variance will authorize the development of one remote yurt for overnight camping, with the primary use intended for hunters, on the Flambeau River State Forest.

Specific changes to the 2010 Master Plan:

*Page 143 (variance language addition is in **bold**)*

The Flambeau River State Forest provides a range of camping opportunities, ranging from family campgrounds to remote backpack camping, and special permit camping for deer camps. While existing camping will be maintained, several new, expanded, or improved camping opportunities are planned. Many changes are in response to the public's desire for increased amenities at campgrounds and more remote camping opportunities. Changes include providing electric hookup at Connors Lake Campground, building a small rustic campground beside the river and a new group camp, **developing a remote yurt hunter camp for overnight camping along the Flambeau Hills Trails**, as well as increasing and improving remote paddle-in and hike-in camping.

Page 143 – add the following section to the Off-River Recreation: Camping section of Chapter 2.

Flambeau Hills Hunter Yurt

The Flambeau Hills Hunter Yurt will accommodate visitors for overnight use, with an emphasis on providing a deer-camp experience for new hunters or those that do not have the full range of equipment or a location for a traditional hunting camp. The yurt will be designed to accommodate hunters and other visitors with a range of physical abilities while simultaneously addressing shifting generational trends and preferences for hunting and camping experiences.

The yurt will serve to continue the Flambeau River State Forest's long history of traditional deer/hunting camps as well as support the department's commitment to improving hunter recruitment and retention. In addition, the yurt will serve as an experiential learning location for Learn to Hunt courses as part of the Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation (R3) program.

The Flambeau Hills Hunter Yurt will provide a unique year-round overnight recreation experience for the public. The yurt will offer access to a network of existing trails and hunter walking paths and its location will be suitable for access to public lands accommodating a wide variety of recreational pursuits throughout the year.

The yurt will be located approximately one-quarter mile north of the parking lot on CTH W and will be accessible via nonmotorized trail.

Management Prescriptions

- Develop one hike-in yurt that provides overnight accommodations for hunters during the hunting seasons and other visitors during the rest of the year. The yurt will be accessible via

nonmotorized trail approximately one-quarter mile from the Flambeau Hills parking area. The yurt's outdoor amenities may include a fire ring, picnic table, game pole, bear-proof storage box, and box latrine. The yurt's interior amenities may include a woodstove, bunk beds, table, and chairs. No candles or open flames will be allowed inside the yurt.

- Design the yurt to blend into or complement the natural landscape to the degree possible and practicable.
- Maintain an accessible path of travel from the parking lot to the yurt when the cross-country ski trail is not snow covered.
- Manage and maintain the yurt for year-round availability, reservable for overnight use in advance of visitor stay.
- No person may hike or snowshoe on the cross-country ski trail from the parking lot to the yurt when the trail is snow covered in accordance with NR 45.04(3)(j).

APPROVALS

Approved: _____ **Date:** _____

Tim Cooke, Administrator, Division of Internal Services

See following pages for additional approvals and supporting information

Variance Initiator or Author: Teague Prichard, State Lands Specialist

Planner: Mitch Horrie, Property Planner

Supporting Approvals

_____ Date; _____

Property Planning Section Chief, LF

_____ Date; _____

Property Manager

_____ Date; _____

Area Supervisor

_____ Date; _____

District Supervisor

_____ Date; _____

Program Bureau Director

Others with a special interest;

Signature: _____ Date; _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date; _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date; _____

Title: _____

Supporting Information

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Variance

The Flambeau River State Forest (FRSF) is the second largest state-owned property managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The FRSF offers just over 90,000 acres of public lands available for a wide variety of recreational pursuits, and is heavily utilized by hunters, trappers, and anglers. Traditional hunting camps are established annually for deer hunting and have a long and storied history on the FRSF. However, over the past nine years there has been a steady decline in the rate of use of traditional hunting camps and the number of youth and young-adult hunters on the property. The proposed yurt will provide a unique overnight recreation experience available to the public year-round and will serve as an alternative camping option that meets the needs of hunters and campers with a range of physical abilities while aligning with shifting generational preferences. The yurt is intended to support entry to the sport of hunting for those that do not have the full range of equipment or a location to facilitate the activity.

Anticipated Primary Benefits of the Proposed Variance

The department believes that adding the remote yurt to the property will have the benefits of furthering the department's commitment to hunter recruitment and retention while perpetuating the longstanding tradition of deer/hunting camps on the FRSF. It is anticipated that the yurt will help to address the trend of a steady decline in the utilization of traditional deer camps and hunting participation rates by youths and young-adults observed on the property over the last nine years.

Compatibility with Statutes, Codes, and Department Policies

The use, rental rates and agreements, operation and maintenance of the yurt will meet all the administrative codes, building codes, and department policies.

The variance has been developed in compliance with ch. NR 44, Wis. Adm. Code. It does not change the land management classifications or result in any use incompatible with the current classifications for the area impacted by the variance.

The department's Division of Forestry and Division of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks support this variance.

How the Master Plan Supports the Proposed Variance:

This variance has been developed in compliance with ch. NR 44, Wis. Adm. Code. The variance is compatible with the management area's Forest Production Management Area classification and is consistent with the overall master plan vision, goals, and recreation objectives for the property.

In particular, this variance is consistent with the following 2010 master plan management objectives on the FRSF:

Page 9, Property Goals:

- Provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing.

Page 143, Off-River Recreation: Camping:

- Provide opportunities for hike-in, remote, primitive back-country camping at designated sites, and for hunting, fishing camps and other special purpose camping at undeveloped sites.

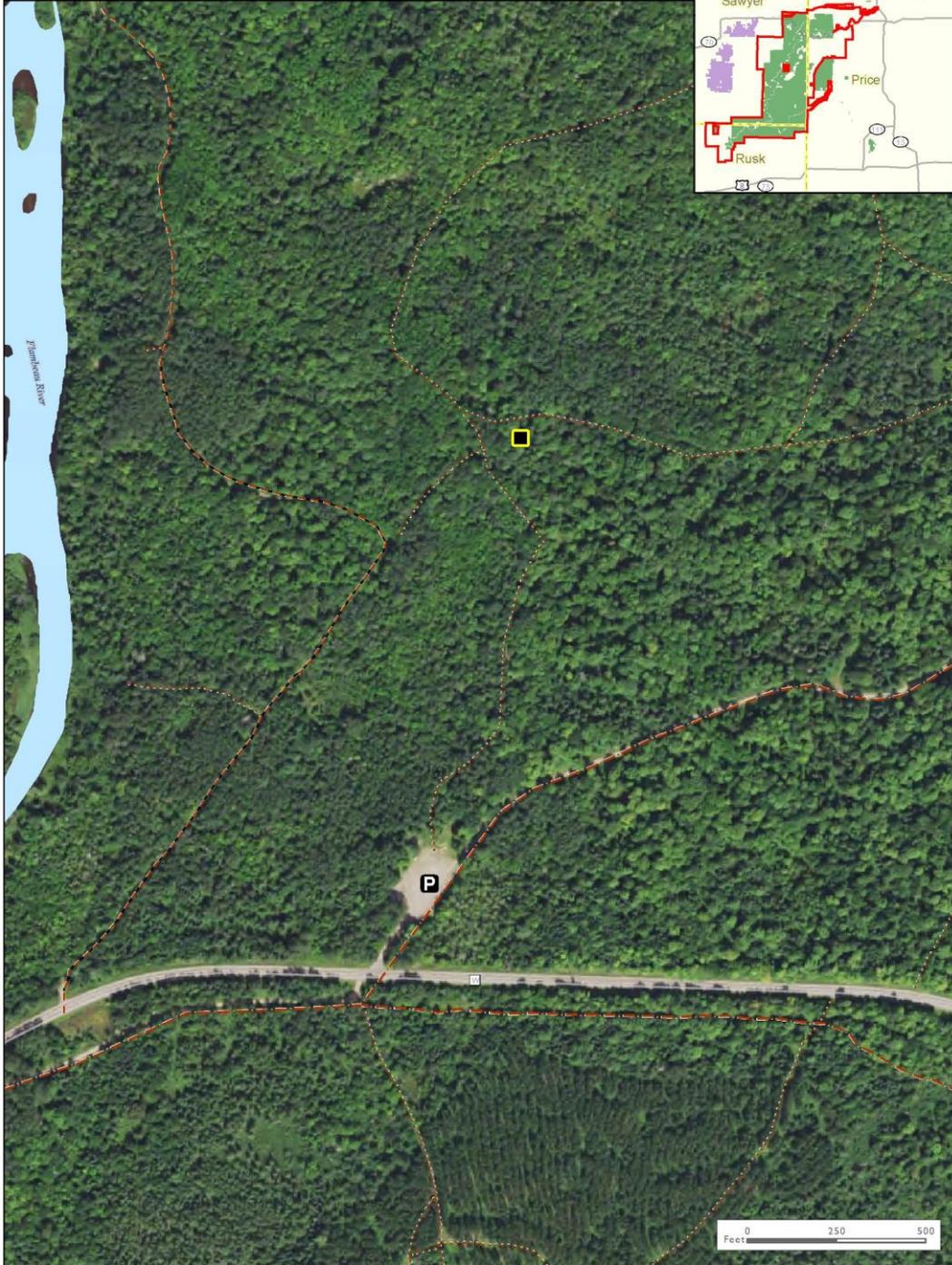
Page 148, Hunting Objectives:

- Maintain and support traditional outdoor sporting activities such as hunting and trapping and fishing by maintaining trails and enhancing or upgrading existing boat landings, access points, and other facilities.

FLAMBEAU RIVER STATE FOREST PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

2019 Variance

DRAFT



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Yurt P Parking Lot | <p>DNR Roads Key</p> <p>NR 44 Road Classification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderately-developed Road Lightly-developed Road Primitive Road | <p>Motorized Public Use</p> <p>Closed = Red</p> |
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WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bureau of
Facilities and Lands
July 09, 2019
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