

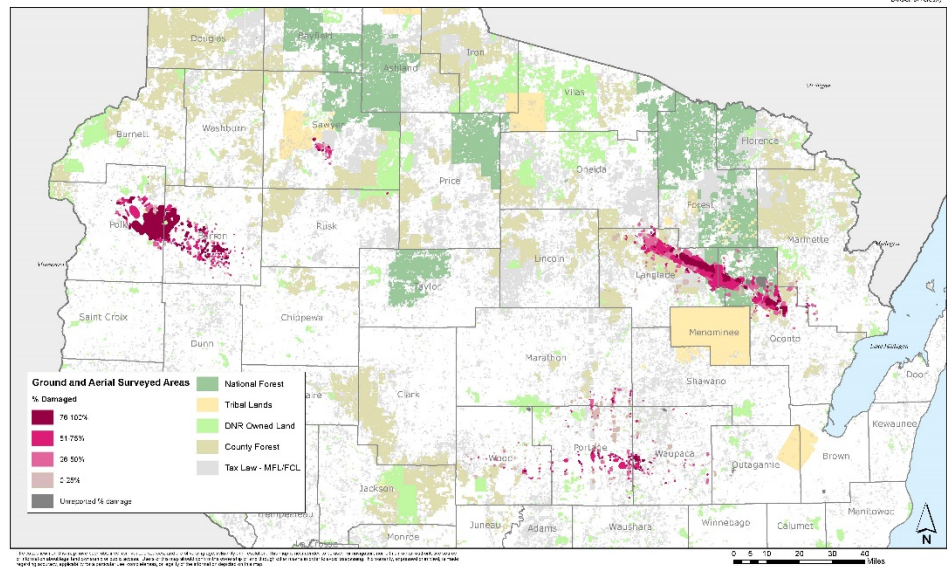
After the Storm News

This newsletter is intended to share the latest information with our partners, stakeholders and timber industry representatives regarding the current state of affairs for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in response to the recent windstorm and resulting damages.

Date: October 23, 2019

Widespread storms July 19-20, 2019, resulted in an estimated 286,000 acres of damage across Wisconsin. The magnitude of the storm impacted multi-jurisdictional boundaries of private landowners, county forest, national forest, scattered state lands, and tribal and municipal properties. The number of acres impacted continues to be refined as additional field reconnaissance is received, analyzed and compiled.

2019 Storm Damage Areas



The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have been working together in response to the storm event, in particular to the damage that occurred in Langlade and Oconto counties. Those coordinated efforts include:

- Good Neighbor Authority timber sales – revising cutting prescriptions to account for salvage, adjusting cutting unit boundaries, harvest timing and access management;
- Sharing of data – including aerial imagery, satellite imagery, etc.;
- Working together to acquire and interpret additional imagery of damaged areas; and
- Sharing of information regarding markets.



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Updates for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest immediately responded to the July 19-20 windstorm event with a Type 3 Incident Management Team focusing on the emergency clearing of roads and restoring access to recreation sites and assisting visitors impacted by the storm. The focus and priority have been on the safety of the public, our employees and property.

Soon after the storm, Forest staff began to size up impacts to existing timber sales, timber stands that were being prepped for a sale, areas being considered for management and other places that were damaged on the Forest.

Below is a summary of the impacts to timber sales on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest as of October 18, 2019.

Type	# of Timber Sales	Acres	Volume (MMBF)	Current Status
Awarded Salvage Sales	6	626	7.9 MMBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diamond Roof ROW Salvage - sold • Twin Pine Barrens Salvage - sold • Depot Aspen Salvage – sold • Hwy 64 Pine Salvage – sold • Hwy 32 Pine Salvage – sold • Piontek Pine Salvage – sold <p>Information at https://www.fs.usda.gov/resources/cnnf/landmanagement/resourcemanagement.</p>
Advertised Salvage Sales	1	101	1.0 MMBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chute Pine Salvage accepting bids to 10/28/2019
Active Sales at Time of Storm	14	5108	Original – 41 MMBF	<p>The Forest is working to seek agreement with timber sale contract holders to modify existing contracts to address the damage and is starting to work with contractors on terms and conditions for potential modifications. These modifications may include updating prescriptions, revaluing sales, adding or deleting harvest acres and contract extensions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven contract modifications have been approved.
Advertised Sales at Time of Storm	2	669	3.4 MMBF	<p>The advertisements were cancelled due to the windstorm. Sale areas are being assessed to determine changed conditions and to prepare new</p>



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				sale packages.
Contracts Modified to add Road/Trail Clearing Service	6			58.8 miles of road and trail clearing with mechanized timber harvesting equipment was added as service work to six individual Stewardship Contracts. 33 miles of this clearing has been completed.

In addition, the Forest Service requested permission to alter normal timber sale program standards and guidelines to expedite the removal of timber following the storm event. Those include:

- The granting of contract extensions for undamaged timber up a maximum of one year given the request meets all of the provisions identified under 36 CFR 223.53 has been approved by the Regional Forester.
- The approval to deviate from cruising and area-determination standards for salvage timber sales has been approved by the Regional Forester.
- The Forest submitted a request to the Small Business Administration (SBA) for waiving of SBA processing requirements for storm impacted SBA set aside sales awarded prior to the blowdown. The request was approved by the Director of Government Contracting, US SBA.
- Current timber sale areas analyzed under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) have been addressed and salvage of timber in them continues to move forward.
- The Forest's request to use deck scaling and virtual boundaries for salvage sales was approved. Because this is a new tool, we held desk scaling training in early October, and will use that process with other approaches to salvage damaged timber.

For areas damaged on the Forest outside of existing timber sales, the Forest is actively reviewing these areas to determine if the completed environmental analysis is adequate to address the change conditions following the storm event and/or what level of additional analysis would be needed under the NEPA. Approximately 5,780 acres of areas with >25% damage are covered by the Supplemental Information Reports under current NEPA. There are approximately 19,000 acres with >25% damage that are not covered by NEPA; which includes:

- The vast majority of the hardest hit portion of the area, extending from the forest boundary to Star Lake.
- Jones Springs
- Critical Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas, such as Sawyer Lake, Rose Lake, Mary Lake, Setting Lake, and Boot Lake.

The Forest is looking into what management activities may be needed for these areas not currently covered under a NEPA decision. The Forest is reviewing the full extent of NEPA tools (including those from recent legislation) available and will choose those that are the most efficient to expedite the desirable outcomes including utilization of the wood, restoring the Forest and reforestation of damaged areas.

Immediately following the storm, a closure order was issued for roads, trails and recreation sites damaged by the storm which is being updated and distributed as areas are cleared and safe again for visitors to the



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National Forest. The most recent version of the closure order can be found at <http://go.usa.gov/xyA8D>.

The Forest is currently ordering up four saw crews to conduct clean-up work on trails and the Heavy Equipment Crew is assisting towns to clear roads.

With hunting season underway, the general forest area of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest is open to visitors; however, visitors are reminded that many hazards exist from the storm event that may pose a safety risk. Visitors should refer to the closure order for recreation areas, trails and roads that were damaged by the storm event and be mindful in order to ensure safety.

Visitors are also reminded that when recreating on public lands to source firewood locally in order to prevent the spread of invasive pests and disease.

Below is a summary of the impacts to recreation areas, roads and trails on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest as of October 21, 2019:

Type	# of Sites/Miles Closed	# of Sites/Miles Open	Current Status
Developed Recreation Areas	6 sites	10 sites	The sites that remain closed were in the hardest hit areas of the Forest and will remain closed until further notice. Many of these areas will be incorporated into timber sales to salvage the timber and remove the damage.
Dispersed Recreation Areas	11 sites	8 sites	
ATV Trails/Routes		All open, except a small section of roads near Jesse Lake.	ATV trails will be opened August 29 except for one small section that was heavily damaged.
Snowmobile Trails	28 miles	167 miles of snowmobile trail cleared <i>*open when conditions allow</i>	The Forest is coordinating with the counties and snowmobile clubs for the clearing of the remaining snowmobile trails. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering ERFO designation on heavily damaged 4.5-mile segment eastern boundary of Jones Spring motorized trail.



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			<i>*Engineering is working on the contract now.</i>
Forest Service Roads	275 miles	472 miles	<p>The Forest has made significant progress on clearing roads of the storm damage. The Forest is working on a plan to clear the remaining roads which may include the use of timber sales, stewardship contracts, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewardship road clearing - in total approximately 32.9 of the 58.8 miles awarded have been completed at a total cost of \$145,875 or \$4,433/mile • For ML 3, 4 and 5 roads (major roads), the Forest met with townships and will work with them to sustain winter use and clear hazards. • The Forest is moving forward with data collection for Emergency Relief for Federally-Owned Roads (ERFO).

Contact Us

Additional information can be found at: <http://go.usa.gov/xyA8D>.

For general information regarding the windstorm event please contact Leah Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist, at 414-297-1154.



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Updates for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The initial response from Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) included resources and staff for thirteen days to all six impacted counties (Polk, Barron, Langlade, Oconto, Wood and Portage) to support volunteer management, public road clearing, Incident Management Team deployment, public information and liaison work.

After the initial public safety concerns were handled, the long-term forest recovery work began and the DNR focus shifted to salvaging timber on public lands and offering assistance to private landowners.

Below is a summary of the Division of Forestry response efforts to date. Additional information regarding storm damage informational and education can be found on our website at: <https://dnr.wi.gov/emergency/>.

In addition to emergency management assistance, DNR offered financial assistance to those impacted by the July 19-20 storms:

- The **urban forestry program** opened applications for catastrophic storm grants to distribute the \$105,000 available in the fund to communities impacted by the storms. They received funding requests from 15 communities (including the Menominee Nation) totaling nearly \$600,000 with damage estimates of more than \$2.4 million.
- The **Wildland Urban Interface** program redirected \$23,000 to support cleanup in communities that are part of the FireWise program or have a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and the Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program issued \$17,366 to forest landowners.

Salvage Sales

Despite the abnormally wet conditions that have hampered efforts, salvage work has progressed on county and state lands:

- The Langlade County Forest (with 81,000 acres damaged by the storms) has sold 26 salvage sales.
- Polk and Barron County have also each sold a salvage sale.
- On state lands, 12 salvage sales have been established and sold within the impacted counties.
- In the next few weeks, there will be an additional 3000+ acres of salvage sales advertised across both state lands and the Langlade County Forest.

Salvaging as much of the wood as possible in a timely manner remains a high priority for the Wisconsin DNR. This is important to maximize the amount of wood that is usable before it starts to degrade, minimize the losses due to insects and diseases and to minimize the amount of wood on the ground when the spring 2020 fire season arrives. The DNR will continue to work closely with the Forest Service and other partners



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towards those goals.

Of the nearly 286,000 acres damaged by these storms, approximately 195,850 acres are privately owned. Division of Forestry staff mailed more than 9,000 informational packets and letters to family forest landowners in the impacted counties. Staff conducted six forest landowner information meetings with hundreds of landowners attending to learn how to approach the recovery work on their property. DNR foresters have also responded to hundreds of requests from woodland owners for advice and “walk-throughs” of their property. In addition, the Tax Law Section is working diligently with impacted tax law landowners to expedite cutting notices and provide guidance with salvaging efforts. Providing assistance and connecting the impacted private forest landowners with the resources they need will be an ongoing effort in partnership with many other groups.

DNR staff have also shared storm updates with the Natural Resources Board, the Wisconsin County Forests Association, and the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association in addition to Division of Forestry blog posts regarding [forest health concerns](#) and [salvaging storm-damaged wood](#). The [first edition of this joint update](#) is also posted online in case you missed it.

For specific storm damage inquiries and private forestry assistance, please contact the local forester within the county of interest using our assistance locator on our website at:

<https://mywisconsinwoods.org/foresters/>, or at our DNR website at:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestlandowners/locator/>.

For general storm damage inquiries or updates, please contact Kirsten Held, Division of Forestry Outreach Specialist at (608) 219-9605 or email Kirsten.Held@Wisconsin.gov.

Type	# of Timber Sales	Acres	Current Status
Active GNA Sales at Time of Storm	11	1412	The WI DNR had active contracts during the storm dates, and sales experiencing damage were modified to salvage merchantable timber and clear roads within the sale areas.
GNA Sales Prepped for Advertisement at Time of Storm	6	840	These sales were not bid out and are now going through the modification process to account for salvage timber. They will go through additional approval to be ready for sale in December 2019.

