



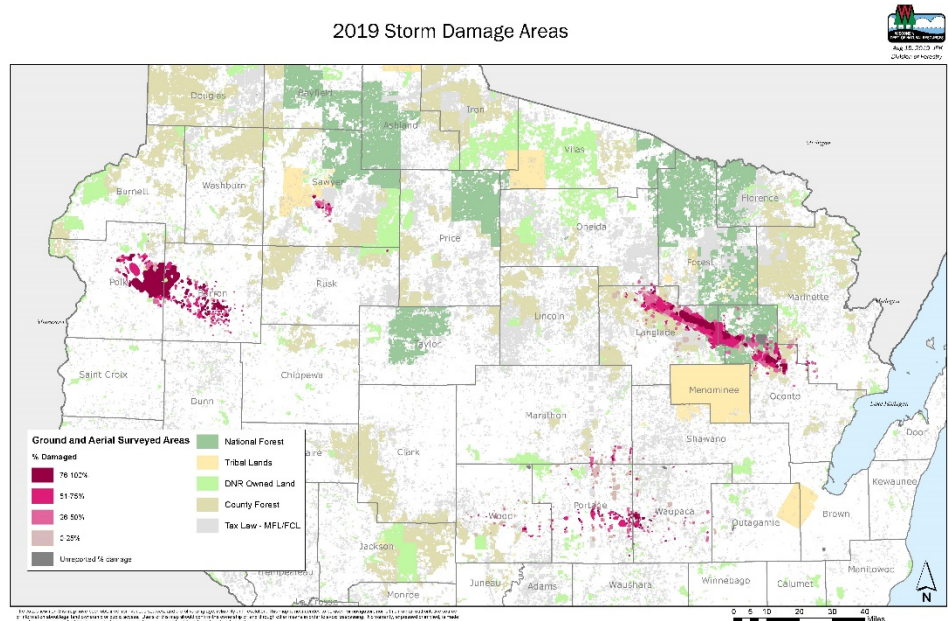
# After the Storm News

*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:** December 19, 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

Since the storm, the Forest has been in recovery mode, facilitating several timber sales and initiating National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis.

Below is a summary of timber sales on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest as of December 16, 2019:

Type	# of Timber Sales	Acres	Volume (MMBF)	Current Status
Awarded Salvage Sales	14	2,308	26.5 MMBF	Information at <a href="https://www.fs.usda.gov/resources/cnnf/landmanagement/resourcemanagement">https://www.fs.usda.gov/resources/cnnf/landmanagement/resourcemanagement</a> .
Advertised Salvage Sales	6	1,011	10.9 MMBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue School Salvage accepting bids to 12/17/2019</li> <li>• Got Schooled Salvage accepting bids to 12/18/2019</li> <li>• Old School Salvage accepting bids to 12/19/2019</li> <li>• Lower Island Salvage accepting bids to 1/7/2020</li> <li>• Bass Salvage accepting bids to 1/8/2020</li> <li>• Pat Lake Pine accepting bids to 1/9/2020</li> </ul>
No Bid Salvage Sales	4	617	7.6MMBF	
Active Sales at Time of Storm	14	5108	Original – 41 MMBF Additions – 9.1 MMBF	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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nine contract modifications have been approved.</li> </ul>
Advertised Sales at Time of Storm	2	669	3.4 MMBF	The advertisements were cancelled due to the windstorm. Sale areas are being assessed to determine changed conditions and to prepare new sale packages. One sale was split into two salvage offerings and included in awarded sales volume above.
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. Final included work has been completed and accepted.



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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 Forest has initiated the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) analysis for areas that were not analyzed at the time of the storm. 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. To date **5** deck scaled sales have been awarded and **4** more are currently advertised.

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

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.

With snowmobile season about to be underway, snowmobilers are especially warned of hazards within and on sides of trails in the blowdown areas. With current trail conditions, its best to slow down and be prepared



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to stop because of possible debris on and below the snow's surface. Riders are encouraged to stay on the trail and enjoy their ride at a safe speed.

Below is a summary of the impacts to recreation areas, roads and trails on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest as of December 10, 2019:

Type	# of Sites/Miles Closed	# of Sites/Miles Open	Current Status
Developed Recreation Areas	4 sites	12 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	8 sites	11 sites	
Cross Country Ski Trails	13.2	30.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jones Springs – closed; 11 miles</li> <li>• Lakewood Ski Trails – open; 17.2 miles</li> <li>• Maranatha Ski Trail – open; 4 miles; closed 2.2</li> <li>• McComb Ski Trails – 9.5 miles open; salvage harvest planned in the trail area may close all or portions of the trail this winter.</li> </ul>
Snowmobile Trails	~2.5 Miles	221 miles of snowmobile trail cleared <i>*open when conditions allow, early heavy snow has delayed the trail opening.</i>	<p>The Forest is coordinating with the counties and snowmobile clubs for the clearing of the remaining snowmobile trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.5-mile connector trail to Langlade County is currently being cleared by contract.</li> <li>• A one-mile section of trail near Perch Lake will be cleared in 2020.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Forest is moving forward with data collection for Emergency Relief for Federally-Owned Roads (ERFO).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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## Contact Us

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

For general information regarding the windstorm event please contact Casey Jardine, Acting Public Affairs Officer, 715-362-1354 or [casey.jardine@usda.gov](mailto:casey.jardine@usda.gov)





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## Updates for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Nearly five months after these devastating storms, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and partners continue to make progress towards the goal of assisting with the salvage of damaged timber as quickly as possible. In addition to maximizing the value of the damaged trees and minimizing the impact of insects and diseases, the goal is to lessen the fuel load on the ground before the spring 2020 fire season begins. Our focus has been on Northeast Wisconsin. Here is a recap of the progress in this heavily-damaged area.

### Private lands:

- In all storm-damaged areas, DNR foresters have responded to hundreds of requests from woodland owners for advice and “walk-throughs” of their property. In the Northeast District, DNR foresters completed 150 walk-throughs (encompassing 5,167 acres) and handled another 50 requests via phone or email.
- The DNR Tax Law Section is working diligently with impacted tax law landowners to expedite cutting notices and provide guidance with salvaging efforts.
- DNR foresters are available to assist private landowners. Find contact information at <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestLandowners/locator/> or <https://mywisconsinwoods.org/foresters/>

### County lands:

- The Langlade County Forest has established more than 50 timber sales on 7,157 acres.
- The Oconto County Forest has established five salvage sales on about 500 acres.

### State lands:

- Recon has been completed on more than 9,800 acres with more than 2,000 acres projected as needing salvage sales.
- In the Northeast District, eight salvage timber sales (totaling 468 acres) have been sold with three of these completed so far. Six state lands timber sales have been sold in the Northwest District.
- Staff project another 19 salvage timber sales (totaling 977 acres) on state lands in Langlade County early in 2020.

### Federal lands:

- Salvage prices and contract extensions were negotiated for sold sales impacted by the storms. DNR has received good feedback overall from loggers regarding salvage negotiations.
- Approximately 75 stand-level harvest prescriptions have been modified, reviewed and approved by the Forest Service silviculturist.



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- FY20 establishment goal of approximately 1,300 acres of non-salvage sales is on track to be completed May 2020.
- Approximately 1,000 additional acres of salvage timber sales are in the planning stage to be established in FY21.
- Good Neighbor Authority sales:
  - Sold Sales impacted: 16
  - Sold Sale Acres: 1623
  - Sold Sale additional volume (estimated salvage volume in addition to what was already sold): 1.8 MMBF
  - **Sold Sales acres salvaged as of 12/9/2019: 375 acres in 6 sales**
  - Sold Sales 12/11/2019: 4
  - Acres Sold 12/11/2019: 426
  - Sold Sale Volume 12/11/2019: 4.4 MMBF
  - Unsold sales impacted: 3
  - Unsold sales acres: 575
  - Unsold Sale volume with salvage added (from 2460-001): 3.3 MMBF

