

Dept. of Natural Resources: Approves master plan variances for Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest and Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has approved master plan variances at two state properties that will create additional ATV/UTV routes and trails within the areas. The variances apply to the [Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest Master Plan](#) and the [Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area Master Plan](#).

As described in Chapter NR 44 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, a master plan variance is a change in the use or management of an area that is consistent with the area's land management classification and objectives.

The [variance to the Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest Master Plan](#) approves approximately 7 miles of ATV/UTV route and trail in four segments. The approved routes and trails contribute to regional ATV/UTV network connectivity and rider safety. This variance approval accompanies an [October 2017 amendment](#) to the recreation portion of the [State Forest's 2005 Master Plan](#) and subsequent variances approved in 2018, 2019 and 2021.

Spread across three counties near the towns of Woodruff, Minocqua and Boulder Junction, the [Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest](#) provides opportunities for a variety of outdoor recreation on its 236,000 acres and more than 900 lakes within its boundaries.

The [variance to the Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area Master Plan](#) approves an additional 2.5 miles of ATV/UTV routes and trails in two segments. Most of the approved mileage is on DNR roads currently open to highway-legal vehicle use during the summer months and snowmobiles during winter months.

Located in Oneida County, the [Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area](#) is a large, island-studded reservoir that includes 73 miles of shoreline (95% of which is undeveloped), 106 islands and seven boat landings. The [Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area Master Plan](#) was approved by the Natural Resources Board in 2016.

The public can review the approved variances and associated maps by visiting the DNR's [Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest Master Plan](#) and the [Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area Master Plan](#) webpages.