

## Forest Rules

This information is intended to help you during your visit to the state forest. For complete rules and regulations, contact the forest office or a Ranger.

**State Property**—Do not remove, deface or destroy any natural growth, signs or other Department property. Please do not enter any locked or area posted closed.

**Vehicle Admission Sticker**—A vehicle admission sticker must be attached to the windshield by its own adhesive when a motor vehicle is operated in Old Veteran's Lake Campground.

**Motor Vehicle Operation**—All visitors are required to operate their vehicles within posted speed limits, and park only in designated areas. Vehicles must be legally registered to operate in the state forest.

**Personal Conduct**—Disorderly or excessively boisterous conduct is prohibited on state lands. At no time may noise on a campsite create a disturbance to other forest users.

**Personal Property**—Storage of your personal property on state forest land is prohibited. This includes storing ice shanties and mooring boats at boat landings; as well as removing deer stands at the close of hunting hours each day.

**Pets**—All pets must be on a leash no longer than 8 feet in the campground. Please clean up after your pet. Pets are prohibited in buildings, designated beaches, and on groomed cross-country ski trails.

**Camping**—Camping is available only at the designated sites at the family campground, canoe and backpack sites, and boat-in sites. Fees and permits are required. Camping on undesignated sites is prohibited.

**Litter**—Please carry out all refuse and recyclables with you. Please leave the forest cleaner than when you arrived.

**Fires**—Do not leave fires unattended and extinguish all fires before leaving. Burning of household refuse is prohibited.

**Snowmobiles & ATVs**—Are allowed on designated trails only. Illegal snowmobile and ATV use is strictly prohibited.

**Bay Area Medical Center** 1-888-788-2070  
Marinette

**Ambulance** 911

**Poison Control** 911, or 1-800-222-1222

**Marinette County Sheriff** 911, 715/732-7600

**Forest Headquarters** 715/757-3965



### Peshtigo River State Forest

N10008 Paust Lane  
Crivitz, WI 54114  
715-757-3965



<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/StateForests/peshtigoRiver/>

#### For camping reservations:

<http://wisconsinstateparks.reserveamerica.com>

or

1-888-WIPARKS (947-2757)

#### For general

#### Department of Natural Resources information:

1-888-WDNRINFo (1-888-936-7463)

[dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov), keyword Peshtigo River

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PUB-FR-359 2015



<http://dnr.wi.gov/u/?q=114>

# Peshtigo River State Forest





## History of the River

In the mid-1800s, the Crivitz area was a wild territory. After the Great Peshtigo Fire in 1871, a wave of new immigrants began sweeping through the area. Many of these new immigrants came as adventurers, but many came to help rebuild the area. Logging and sawmills were the major industries until the forested lands became depleted from over harvesting and wildfire. It was during this time the cut over and burned forestland was converted to agricultural land and construction of the dams began on the Peshtigo River.

The Peshtigo River originates north of Crandon, WI, near the source of the Wolf River. The river flows through Forest and Marinette Counties before emptying into Green Bay, seven miles southeast of the city of Peshtigo. The Peshtigo meanders its way through heavy forestlands, wooded lowlands, farmlands, and marshy sloughs. An interesting fact about the Peshtigo River is that it has more and larger rapids for its length than any other river in Wisconsin. This fact, together with its high and rocky banks, assured numerous sites for dams. The primary function of the dams is the generation of electrical energy for northeast Wisconsin, but they also contribute to the recreational enjoyment and economic progress and stability of this area.

The High Falls Dam was constructed during 1907–1911, and began operation around 1911. The Caldron Falls Dam was constructed during 1924–1926 and began operation during 1925. The Johnson Falls Dam was constructed from 1922–1924 and operation began in 1924. The Bagley (Potato Rapids) dam didn't begin operation until about 1959.

## History of Good Stewardship

In 2001, the state began acquiring this property from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPSC). WPSC and its predecessor companies had managed the property since 1910. In 2004, the final land transfer was complete and state ownership now comprises over 9,200 acres, plus over 3,000 acres of submerged land.

The Peshtigo River State Forest is managed by the Division of Forestry within the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. A Master Plan was approved by the Natural Resources Board in September 2007. The Plan spells out how the property will be managed, used and developed, how it will look, and the benefits it will provide. It defines the recreational uses, forestry and other land management practices in addition to other aspects of the property's future use and development.

## Forest Management

The Peshtigo River State Forest joins 6 other Northern State Forests within the Division of Forestry: the Brule River, Black River, Flambeau River, Governor Knowles, Northern Highland—American Legion, and Coulee Experimental State Forests. Forestry management goals for the Northern State Forests are determined in their master plans. The most important goal the Division of Forestry has for managing our forests, and one of the reasons this property was established, is to manage and protect the water quality of the Peshtigo River and its flowages, while enhancing wildlife habitat, fisheries, aesthetics, recreation, and to supply quality wood products. These goals are established through the principles of sustainable forestry.

Sustainable forestry means managing the land according to its natural capability to provide a wide array of benefits for now and the future.

Ecological benefits of sustainable forestry on the PRSF include protection of the soils, water quality, native biological diversity, and aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitat. Examples of social benefits include outdoor recreation opportunities, and aesthetic enjoyment. The forest also provides a sustained flow of wood products which is an economic benefit to nearby communities and to Wisconsin as a whole.

Timber sales are established to accomplish many different types of forest management objectives such as producing timber, improving forest health, creating wildlife habitat, increasing tree species diversity, and ensuring adequate forest regeneration. Sawtimber, pulpwood, fuelwood and other forest products can be produced over and over again by using sustainable forest management practices. The availability of wood products on a sustained basis helps support the second largest industry in Wisconsin and provides job opportunities for many people.

## Wildlife

The forests surrounding the Peshtigo Flowages provide abundant food, water, and shelter for a variety of species, such as songbirds, turkeys, white-tailed deer, black bears, and butterflies to name a few. The waters of the flowages provide habitat for many species of waterfowl, bald eagles, Sandhill Cranes, ospreys, common loons, and Great Blue Herons. The flowages are also home to many furbearers as well as various species of amphibians and reptiles. There are numerous opportunities to observe and enjoy wildlife in a remote and wild setting, but please remember to observe from a distance. In particular, to minimize disturbance, make sure to stay at least 100 yards away from eagle and osprey nests.

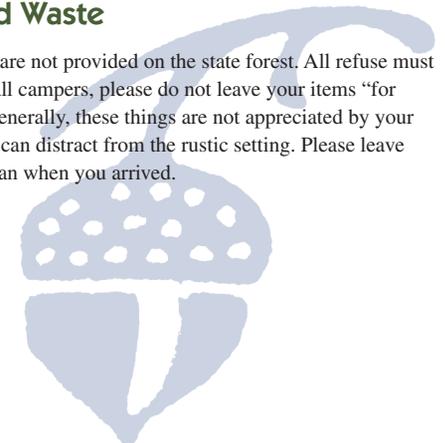
## Driftwood

Driftwood provides valuable fish and wildlife habitat and adds to the unique character of the flowages. It is rapidly disappearing through natural processes and from illegal harvest. Removal of driftwood from the property is prohibited by law.

We also ask that you do not attempt to burn driftwood. Generally driftwood is water logged and does not burn well, even if it appears dry on the outside.

## Garbage and Waste

Garbage containers are not provided on the state forest. All refuse must be carried out. For all campers, please do not leave your items "for the next camper." Generally, these things are not appreciated by your fellow campers and can distract from the rustic setting. Please leave the forest cleaner than when you arrived.





## Hunting and Trapping

All lands within the Peshtigo River State Forest are open for hunting during the scheduled seasons. The only exception to this is a 100-yard buffer zone around the campground and picnic areas. White-tail deer, small game, black bear, and migratory birds are the primary game species. Trappers can find beaver, muskrat, raccoon, fisher, and mink on the property. All ground blinds and any elevated device must be removed from the property at the close of hunting hours each day, unless the ground blinds are constructed entirely of dead vegetation found on the property. In addition, all ground blinds used on DNR-controlled lands during any gun deer season must display a minimum of 144 square inches of solid blaze orange material that is visible 360 degrees around the blind. You must have the appropriate licenses for hunting and trapping, and please review the regulations before you hunt or trap on the state forest.

## Snowmobiling and ATV Trails

The Peshtigo River State Forest has approximately 20 miles of snowmobile trails, which may also be used as winter ATV trails. These trails are run in cooperation with Marinette County and the local snowmobile clubs. Ample parking is available at Boat Landings 3, 5 and 9.

A small portion of the Woodland Trails ATV trail runs through the state forest. Besides winter ATV riding on snowmobile trails, this is the only location where ATV's are allowed to ride on the state forest. It is your responsibility to know where you can legally ride, and illegal ATV use is strictly prohibited. Marinette County has a vast network of ATV trails throughout the county, visit [therealnorth.com](http://therealnorth.com) for more information.

## Hiking and Cross-Country Skiing

The 7-mile Spring Rapids Trail System is 5 miles west of Crivitz, off of County Road W to Kirby Lake Lane. This hiking / cross country skiing trail system is comprised of various loops that provide some extremely steep hills, breathtaking views of the river, quiet serenity except for the rush of the Peshtigo River, and provide for a variety of distances. During the ski season, the trails are groomed for classical and skate skiing. Pets, hiking and snowshoeing are not permitted on groomed ski trails.

The 3-mile Seymour Rapids Trail System is 9½-miles west of Crivitz, off of Bushman Road to Marinette County Road 1634. This system is smaller than the Spring Rapids trail, but also provides some steep hills and beautiful scenery. There is an easy ½-mile trail along the river that offers camera-worthy views of the river.

Old Veteran's Lake Campground features two small trails. The Old Vet's Lake Loop is an easy 1-mile trail that loops around Old Veteran's Lake. Sweet Fern Trail is an easy ½-mile trail that takes visitors from the campground to a vista overlooking High Falls Flowage.

There are numerous "volunteer" trails and forest roads throughout the forest that are open for hiking, snowshoeing and ski touring.

## Boating, Canoeing and Kayaking

Over 3,200 acres of water offer scenic boating opportunities and access to the islands and backwaters of the Peshtigo River Flowages. There are 16 boat landings available for public use, 7 on High Falls, 6 on Caldron Falls, 1 on Johnson Falls, and 2 on the Peshtigo and Bagley Flowages. Please refer to the map for landing locations and facilities available at each landing. The large size of Caldron Falls and High Falls offer water skiing, power boating, and personal watercraft opportunities. However, due to the fluctuating water levels, be advised to use slow speeds and/or use deeper channels because submerged rocks and snags are numerous.

Despite the large dams, the Peshtigo is considered one of the great paddling rivers of Wisconsin and the upper Peshtigo offers some of the most challenging whitewater rapids in the area. Rental kayaks and shuttle services are available from local outfitters. The "Roaring Rapids" section (Farm Dam Landing to Boat Landing #12) is not for unskilled paddlers. This short section of the river offers some of the most intense whitewater in the area. Boat Landing #12 has ample parking and is an easy place to take out. The section of the river between the Johnson Falls Dam to Spring Rapids contains some Class I and II rapids. This section of the river is maintained as a trout fishery and it is not uncommon to see anglers wading in the river. Parking is available on Wisconsin Public Service property near the Johnson Falls Dam, and off the angler access roads on state forest property. Ask state forest staff for more detailed information.



Caldron Falls and High Falls have numerous bays that are ready to be explored. Both flowages do have some intense recreational boating, however the quiet, shallow bays will have less use. The various boat landings along the flowages provide parking for vehicles and trailers. The south end of High Falls, commonly known as “Bass Bay” presents an escape from recreational boaters. The islands on the south end of the flowage offers a perfect spot for a break or picnic. In Caldron Falls, “South Bay” and “Crane Bay” have quiet paddling opportunities, as well as the most northern stretch of the river as it flows from Boat Landing #12 downstream to Boat Landing #11.

Johnson Falls, the Peshtigo and Bagley Flowages are smaller flowages with less recreational boaters, and paddlers will enjoy each one. Johnson Falls is surrounded by forested cover, and wildlife sightings are common. Bagley Flowage has numerous bays and channels to explore.

## Camping

The state forest offers 4 different types of camping for a variety of users. Two types of camping, a family campground and boat-in campsites, can be reserved. Reservations are recommended, but not required. The two other types of camping, canoe camping and backpack camping require no fees, but a free permit must be filed with the state forest office prior to setting up camp. Contact the state forest office to receive a permit.

Old Veteran’s Lake Campground is a rustic family campground with 16 sites, located off of Parkway Road approximately 3.5 miles north of County Road X. Canoeing, fishing and swimming are available on Old Veteran’s Lake and nearby High Falls Flowage offers recreational boating and fishing opportunities as well. Camping and vehicle admission fees are required.

The state forest offers 7 boat-in campsites. 4 sites are located on 2 islands in the southern portion of High Falls Flowage, and 3 sites are located along the north shore of Caldron Falls Flowage. All of these sites are accessible by watercraft only. Each site as a canoe rack / boat tie up station, picnic table, fire ring, privy and benches. There is no potable water available at the sites. Camping fees are required.

To make a reservation at the family campground or boat-in sites, visit <http://wisconsinstateparks.reserveamerica.com> or call 1-888-947-2757. A free permit is required for camping at the canoe and backpack campsites, which is available on our website or by contacting the state forest office.

The state forest has 10 designated canoe campsites and 1 backpack site. The sites are located in a variety of locations along Johnson Falls Flowage and the Peshtigo River, downstream from the Johnson Falls dam. Yellow signs visible from the water designate where the canoe campsites are located and these sites are accessible by watercraft users only. Backpack campers will have to hike approximately 1-mile along a marked trail to reach the backpack site, and there is a parking spot located off of High Falls Road nears Lands’ End Lane. All of the canoe and backpack sites consist of a tent pad and fire ring, and some sites have picnic tables. A privy is available nearby. There is no potable water available at the sites.



## Fishing

The Peshtigo River and its flowages provide excellent fishing opportunities. Caldron Falls covers 1,018 acres and has a maximum depth of 40 feet. For the musky angler, you will be pleased to learn Caldron Falls is the only Class A rated musky water in Marinette County. In addition, the flowage is also home to walleye, northern pike, large and smallmouth bass plus numerous panfish. High Falls Flowage covers 1,498 acres and has a maximum depth of 54 feet. Like Caldron Falls, there is good musky fishing in High Falls, but there is also very good smallmouth bass fishing. Walleye, northern pike, largemouth bass, and various panfish are also found here. Johnson Falls Flowage, a smaller flowage of 158 acres with a maximum depth of 37 feet, offers the angler a mixture of fish: muskies, walleye, trout, bass and panfish.

After the Johnson Falls Dam, the river narrows as it enters the beautiful Peshtigo River Fly Fishing stretch. This is a Category 5 Regulated Trout Water, meaning special regulations apply to all species of fish. Please consult the current “Trout Fishing Regulations and Guide” for current regulations.

The Bagley Flowage (aka Potato Rapids) near the city of Peshtigo, is 281 acres with a maximum depth of 20 feet. Walleye, northern pike, largemouth bass and panfish are present. There are several unnamed lakes and streams throughout the state forest that offer additional angling opportunities.

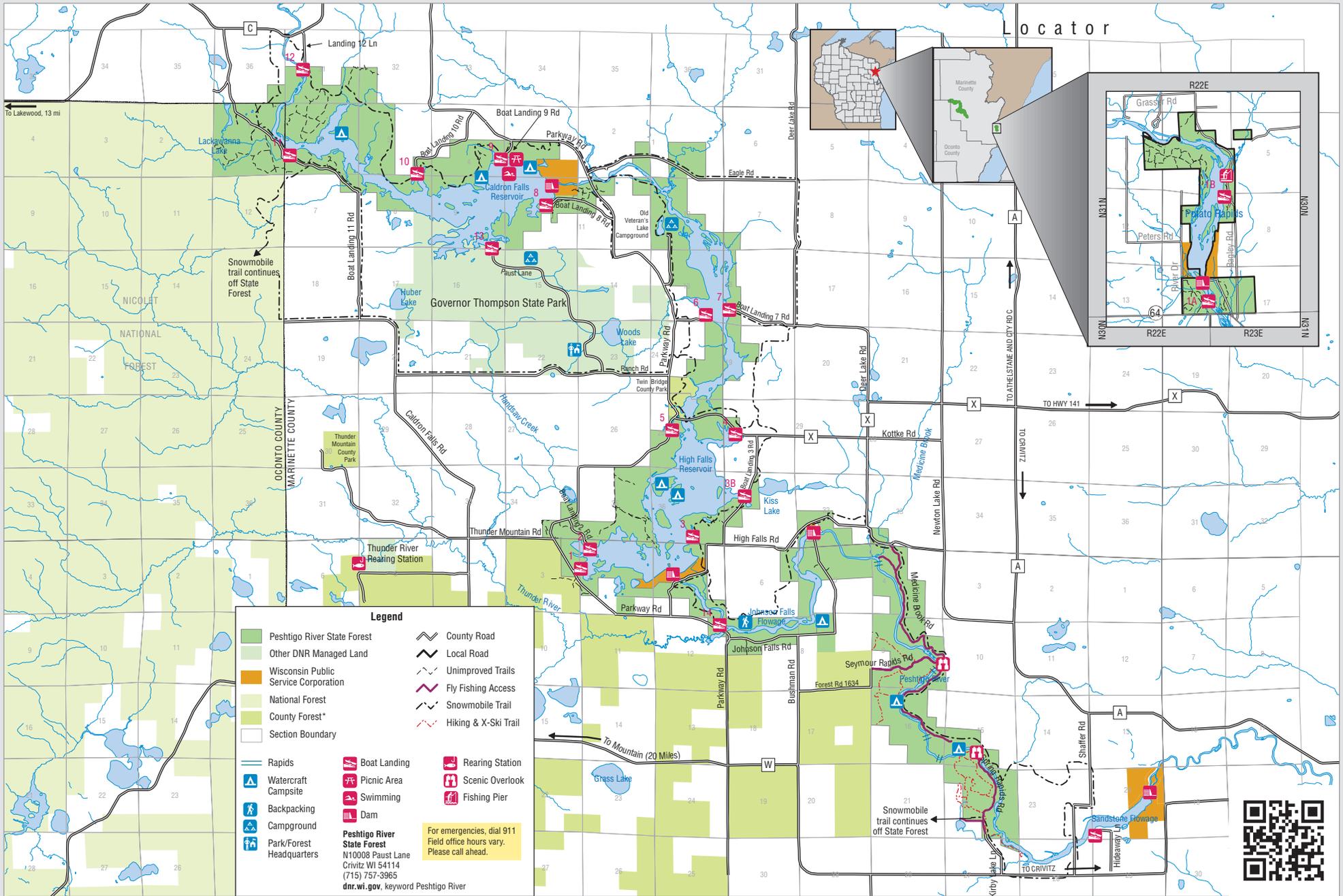
## Equestrian Riding and Mountain Bike Riding

There are no designated equestrian or mountain bike trails in the state forest. However, the forest is open to these activities. Except for during the winter months, the snowmobile trails and angler access roads are open to equestrian riders and mountain bikers. In addition, there are numerous volunteer trails throughout the forest that can be used by equestrian riders and mountain bikers. Together, these trails provide over 35 miles of trail riding. Riders should use caution when on these trails as other users may be using the trails at the same time, and also be aware that many trails may cross private land. For a safe trail riding experience, mountain bikers should yield the right of way to let horses pass. It is recommended that equestrian riders let other trail users know when it safe to pass. Please respect private landowners and do not trespass. There are some areas where equestrian riding is prohibited due to sensitive plant communities located in that area. These areas are posted closed to equestrian riding. Please contact the state forest office for further information.

## Swimming

There are two designated beaches within the state forest: one at Old Veteran’s Lake Campground and one at Boat Landing #9. For everyone’s safety, please do not swim in boat launch areas.





The data shown on this map have been obtained from various sources, and are of varying age, reliability, and resolution. This map is not an authoritative source of information about legal land ownership or public access.

\*Due to scale and processing limitations, some County Forest parcels depicted on the map are shown as full 40-acre units. In reality, actual County Forest acreage amounts may be much smaller than 40 acres.



# Peshtigo River State Forest



Wisconsin DNR Division of Forestry  
 March 2015