

Eau Claire County Forest Use Policies

The Eau Claire County Parks & Forest Department reminds hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts of these county regulations when using the Eau Claire County forest and Coon Fork and Harstad campgrounds this fall and winter.

Camping: is allowed on Eau Claire County forestland year round. After 14-nights campers may renew their forest camping permit one time for a minimum of 28 nights. After 28 nights, campers MUST leave the forest for 1-day before returning. **County Forest Camping Permits are REQUIRED.** Permits can be purchased at: www.eccountyparks.com or at Harstad or Coon Fork Campgrounds. The \$10 fee covers a 14-night period. Permits must be displayed in the campsite in a prominent place. When camping on county forestland all garbage must be packed out from campsites, not buried. Human waste must be buried.

Harstad and Coon Fork campgrounds remain open for camping year round with limited amenities and reduced fees after September 16. Self-registration and payment must be done at the campground entrances. Pit toilets remain open and hand pumps for water are available at both campgrounds. No firewood is available after September 16. It is illegal to cut any standing trees for firewood in the parks.

Tree Stands: Portable tree stands must be removed from the forest at the end of hunting hours each day. No permanent tree stands, the use of nails into trees and screw-in type tree climbing steps are allowed. It is unlawful to construct, occupy or use any elevated scaffold or other device other than portable tree stands. It is unlawful to cause damage to trees by the placement, erection or removal of tree stands or other means of getting access to trees. Tree stands left overnight will be considered abandoned and subject to confiscation and disposal by the county.

Motor Vehicles: Licensed motor vehicles are only allowed on woods trails that are not gated, posted, or bermed to restrict travel. It is unlawful to use non-licensed motor vehicles on county forestland. All motorcycle operation is prohibited. ATV/UTV operation is not allowed except on designated ATV/UTV trails/routes and as authorized by a disabled access permit from the county. It is unlawful to operate a motor vehicle in such a manner (such as mud-bogging or hill climbing) to cause significant soil erosion.

Disabled Access Permits: Free permits are available that allow the holder of a DMV disabled parking permit or Wisconsin DNR Class A, B, or C disabled permit to use an ATV/UTV or other motor vehicle as a means of personal conveyance on county forestland. Permits can be acquired from the Parks & Forest Department between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. The person requesting a county permit must bring their DMV or DNR permit as well as drivers license with them when getting this permit. Disabled Access Permits expire when DMV or DNR permit expires.

Gates on County Forestland: Some areas of county forest are gated to prohibit vehicle access. Reasons for prohibiting public access include problems with garbage dumping, arson fires, and soil erosion. It is unlawful to operate any unauthorized motor vehicle or bicycle on roads or trails that are gated, bermed with dirt, or posted to prohibit travel, unless the operator has a disabled access permit.

No Hunting or Trapping in County Parks: All county parks (Big Falls, Coon Fork, Harstad, L.L. Phillips, Lowes Creek, Lake Altoona and Lake Eau Claire) are closed to hunting and trapping. For clarification of specific boundary line locations between county forestland and county parks, contact the Parks & Forest Department. It is unlawful for any person to have in his or her control, in any of the county parks, waysides or special use areas, any firearm or air gun as defined in Section 939.22 (2) Statutes, unless it is unloaded and enclosed in a carrying case or any bow, crossbow, or slingshot, unless it is unstrung or enclosed in a carrying case. Hunting is allowed on the county forest during established hunting seasons including at the Donald L. Eisberner Memorial Forest and Canoe Landing, Hamilton Falls wayside and canoe landing, Evergreen Ski Area, the Eau Claire National Rifle Club Range, Tower Ridge Recreation Area, except that discharging of firearms at Tower Ridge Recreation Area any time after the deer gun season is prohibited. Trapping is allowed at Tower Ridge Recreation Area only from November 1 through December 15.

No Dumping of Garbage or Yard Waste: Dumping of any debris including leaves, twigs, stumps, brush, waste materials, sand, garbage, litter, etc. on county forestland or in parks is prohibited.

Guettinger Woods & Wildlife Area: This 123 acre property donated to the county by the Guettinger's, is located south of Eau Claire off HWY 37 and is an area open to the public for hiking, snowshoeing, and wildlife observation. No hunting or trapping is allowed on this property.

Other Regulations: It is unlawful to disturb, vandalize, damage, deface, remove, paint or mark on any rocks, archeological or geological features, signs, or structures, to drive nails into trees, or to move, injure, or deface county property. The picking of edible fruits, nuts and fungi is allowed on the forest.

VIOLATIONS OF COUNTY ORDINANCES CAN RESULT IN THE ISSUANCE OF A VIOLATION NOTICE OR A COUNTY CITATION.