



United States Department of Agriculture

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest seeking members for Resource Advisory Committees

RHINELANDER, Wis. (November 25, 2019) – Officials of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest are seeking applications to fill multiple positions on a federal Resource Advisory Committee.

“The Forest is seeking a diverse representation of applicants to serve as members on the Northern Wisconsin Resource Advisory Committee,” said Paul Strong, Forest Supervisor on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. “RAC’s are a great way for interested community members to engage in a public lands dialogue and recommend natural resource improvement projects on the national forest funded by the Secure Rural Schools Act.”

The Chequamegon-Nicolet has been approved to merge the Chequamegon RAC and Nicolet RAC into the Northern Wisconsin Secure Rural Schools RAC. Combining the two RACs creates administrative efficiencies for the Forest Service and also reduces the amount of public participation required for the RACs from 30 members for the two to 15 for just one; there are also alternates for each category above and beyond the required number of members.

The Forest has also submitted a request for a waiver to reduce the number of members required for the combined RAC from 15 to nine members. If the waiver is approved, it reduces the number of members needed to be present for a meeting quorum to review and approve projects.

Resource Advisory Committees are established as a provision of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, which was recently reauthorized as part of the 2019 appropriations bill.

Resource Advisory Committees are responsible for reviewing and recommending projects for implementation under Title II of the Secure Rural Schools Act. By law, the four-year term, fifteen-member committee is composed of a wide representation of national forest interests.

Recommended projects must have broad community-based support with objectives that may include, but are not limited to: road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration; soil productivity improvements; improvements in forest ecosystem health; watershed restoration and maintenance; restoration, maintenance, and improvement of wildlife and fish habitat; control of noxious and exotic weeds; hazardous fuels reduction; and reintroduction of native species. Projects must be on national forest lands, but can occur on adjacent public or private land if it can be demonstrated that there is a direct benefit to public land resources.



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Committee members are needed for three different categories representing interest groups, specified in Section 205 (d)(2) of the Act:

A) 5 persons that--

- (i) represent organized labor or non-timber forest product harvester groups;
- (ii) represent developed outdoor recreation, off highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation activities;
- (iii) represent energy and mineral development interests; or commercial or recreational fishing interests;
- (iv) represent the commercial timber industry; or
- (v) hold Federal grazing or other land use permits, or represent nonindustrial private forest land owners, within the area for which the committee is organized.

B) 5 persons that represent--

- (i) nationally recognized environmental organizations;
- (ii) regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations;
- (iii) dispersed recreational activities;
- (iv) archaeological and historical interests; or
- (v) nationally or regionally recognized wild horse and burro interest groups, wildlife or hunting organizations, or watershed associations.

(C) 5 persons that--

- (i) hold State elected office (or a designee);
- (ii) hold county or local elected office;
- (iii) represent American Indian tribes within or adjacent to the area for which the committee is organized;
- (iv) are school officials or teachers; or
- (v) represent the affected public at large.

Any Wisconsin resident interested in serving must complete the Advisory Committee Membership Interest form and the Research and Promotion Background Information Form (AD-755) and return them to the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest no later than December 20, 2019. Forms and additional information can be found at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/cnnf/workingtogether/advisorycommittees>.

If you are interested in serving as a member of the Forest's RAC and questions please contact Penny McLaughlin at 715-362-1322 or penny.mclaughlin@usda.gov.

For more information about the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest please visit our website at www.fs.usda.gov/CNNF or follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/CNNF002> or like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/CNNF002>.





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The mission of the U.S. Forest Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 30 percent of the nation's surface drinking water to cities and rural communities and approximately 66 million Americans rely on drinking water that originated from the National Forest System. The agency also has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 900 million forested acres within the U.S., of which over 130 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.)

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