

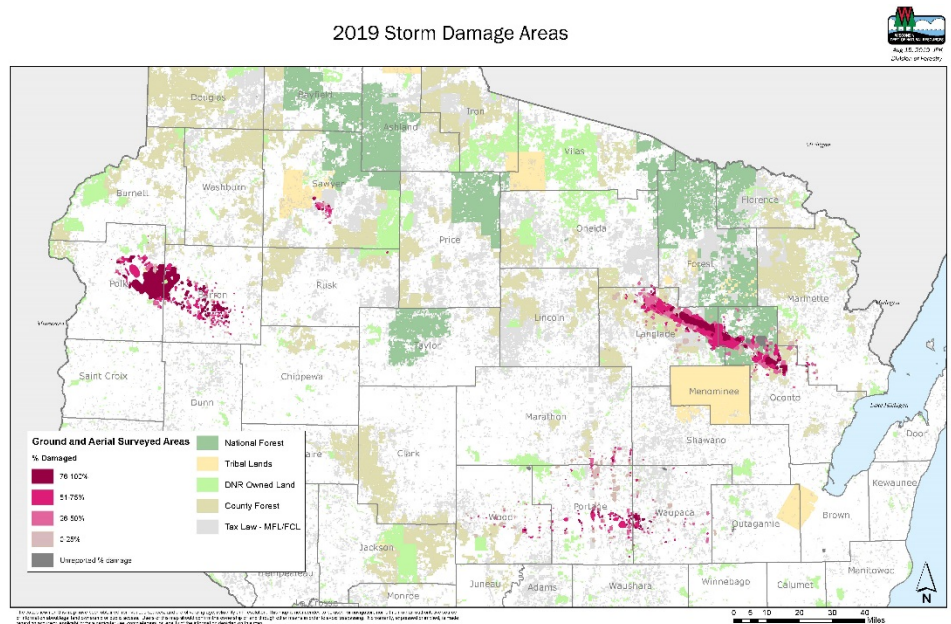
After the Storm News

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: September 5, 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

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest immediately responded to the July 19-20 windstorm event with a Type 3 Incident Management Team focusing on the emergency clearing of roads and restoring access to recreation sites and visitors impacted by the storm. The focus and priority has been on the safety of the public, our employees and property.

Soon after the storm, Forest staff began to size up impacts to existing timber sales, timber stands that were being prepped for a sale, areas being considered for management and other places that were damaged on the Forest.

Below is a summary of the impacts to timber sales on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest as of August 29, 2019.

Type	# of Timber Sales	Acres	Volume (MMBF)	Current Status
Advertised Salvage Sales	3	218	2.9 MMBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diamond Roof ROW Salvage accepting bids to 9/5/2019. Was under preparation at time of storm. Twin Pine Barrens Salvage awarded August 28, 2019. Was under preparation at time of storm. Depot Aspen Salvage accepting bids to 9/4/2019. Sale consists of 2 units from the original Depot Rapids Sale, which was under preparation, that were clear-cut prescriptions. <p>Information at https://www.fs.usda.gov/resources/cnnf/landmanagement/resourcemanagement.</p>
Active Sales at Time of Storm	14	5108	Original – 41 MMBF	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two contract modifications have been approved.
Advertised Sales at Time of Storm	2	669	3.4 MMBF	<p>The advertisements were cancelled due to the windstorm. Sale areas are being assessed to determine changed conditions and to prepare new sale packages.</p>



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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 granting of contract extensions for undamaged timber up a maximum of one year given the request meets all of the provisions identified under 36 CFR 223.53 has been approved by the Regional Forester.
- The approval to deviate from cruising and area-determination standards for salvage timber sales has been approved by the Regional Forester.
- The Forest submitted a request to the Small Business Administration (SBA) for waiving of SBA processing requirements for storm impacted SBA set aside sales awarded prior to the blowdown. The request was approved by the Director of Government Contracting, US SBA.
- The Forest submitted a request to the Regional Forester for the approval to use deck scaling and virtual boundaries for salvage sales.



A contractor works to clear the south end of Diamond Roof Road using retained receipts from stewardship contracts on the National Forest.

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 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

In addition, the Forest is looking into what management activities may be needed for 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>.



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Below is a summary of the impacts to recreation areas, roads and trails on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.

Type	# of Sites/Miles Closed	# of Sites/Miles Open	Current Status
Developed Recreation Areas	6 sites	10 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	11 sites	8 sites	
ATV Trails/Routes		All open, except a small section of roads near Jesse Lake.	ATV trails will be opened August 29 with the exception of one small section that was heavily damaged.
Snowmobile Trails	All Closed		The Forest is coordinating with the counties and snowmobile clubs for the clearing of snowmobile trails. Additional information will be shared regarding the status of trails as winter approaches.
Forest Service Roads	275 miles	472 miles	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. To date, 12.1 miles of the 31.6 miles under contract to be cleared through stewardship contracts have been completed. Additionally, timber sale contract modifications are considering options for purchasers to complete road clearing within sale areas.

Contact Us

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

For general information regarding the windstorm event please contact Hilary Markin, Forest Public Affairs Officer at 715-362-1354.

For questions regarding timber sale contracts please contact Karl Welch, Timber Program Manager, at 715-362-1329.



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Updates for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Forestry initially responded to the July 19-20 windstorm event providing resources and staff to primarily the following counties: Polk, Barron, Langlade, Oconto, Portage, and Waupaca.

Area field staff provided the boots on the ground to assist the local counties with initial road clearings and access. Forest Health staff mapped the affected area, pilots conducted flights to provide recon, IT staff provided mapping expertise and analyses, Managed Forest Law staff assisted in landowner contacts and damage assessments, Private Forestry developed outreach material, including local public meetings; Forest Products reached out for industry mill and logging capacity, Fire Section managed and coordinated resource staff and supported field deployment assignments.

The Division of Forestry coordinated DNR response requests from the State of Emergency Operations Center and DNR duty officer to support various positions – volunteer management, public road clearing, Incident Management Team deployment (SW team), public information and liaison work in Langlade County, and hazard tree removal for state parks.

Soon after the storm, DNR GNA staff began to size up impacts to existing GNA timber sales and GNA stands that were being prepped for the August 2019 GNA Auction.

Below is a summary of the impacts to GNA timber sales on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest as of August 29, 2019.

Type	# of Timber Sales	Acres	Current Status
Active GNA Sales at Time of Storm	11	1412	The WI DNR 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, in coordination with the Forest Service, may include updating prescriptions, revaluing sales, adding or deleting harvest acres and contract extensions.
GNA Sales Prepped for Advertisement at Time of Storm	6	840	The advertisements were originally prepped and approved for the August 2019 GNA Auction.



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Below is a summary of the Division of Forestry response efforts to date. Additional information regarding storm damage informational and education can be found on our website at: <https://dnr.wi.gov/emergency/>.

Forest Health

- Storm damage was mapped according to Forest Service protocol for mapping forest health damages.
- Oak wilt, bark beetle infestation, and Heterobasidion root disease are the major concerns for healthy trees surrounding the storm damaged areas.

Forest Products

- Forest Products Services developed timber contractor lists to assist forest landowners and townships in Langlade County with timber salvage and wood waste disposal efforts. In addition, the program is working to identify additional markets for salvaged forest products.
- Statewide, pulpwood and saw log markets are soft due to excess supply relative to market demand. Demand for wood fuels, historically a steady market for forest biomass, is limited due to cost competitiveness of natural gas.
- The Forest Products team continues to engage with local industry/mills on markets & capacity.
- Additional educational outreach newsletters to be released.

Reforestation

- The Wilson State Nursery is increasing the fall sowing of red pine by about $\frac{3}{4}$ million to accommodate the increased demand expected in spring of 2022 due to storm after reaching out to forestry team leaders.
- The Tree Improvement program will be cooperating with the U.S. Forest Service, Oconto River Seed Orchard, which was severely damaged in the storm, to provide genetic material to begin replacing orchards.

Urban Forestry

- The Urban Forestry Catastrophic Storm Grant applications are open until September 16.
- We are anticipating oversubscription of the Catastrophic Storm grant funding allocation (\$105,000).
- Most impacted communities have completed initial cleanup, creating budget deficits.
- Funding challenges are stump removal/grinding and reforestation to replace lost canopy.

Fire Program

- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) program redirected \$23,000 to support clean-up for Community Wildfire Protection Plan and FireWise communities (Oconto County); will work on priority funding into next year.
- Prior to the spring 2020 fire season, DNR will develop localized fire risk reports within high priority fire landscapes in the storm path.
- Future coordinated fire prevention messages with U.S. Forest Service.



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Private Forestry Outreach

- Newsletter sent to approximately 6,000 landowners in Polk and Barron counties; two landowner workshops to discuss managing salvage timber sales.
- Four public meetings in Langlade and Oconto counties.
- Approximately 2,500 outreach letters were mailed to landowners in Langlade, Oconto and Oneida counties.
- Several hundred private landowner walk-throughs initiated across the impacted counties.
- WI Forest Landowner Grant Program emergency funding prioritized for impacted landowners; see website for more info at <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestLandowners/financial.html>.

Tax Law Program

- Approximately 1,400 tax law landowners and 56,000 acres with known damage to date.
- Continued assessment of properties, prioritizing landowners impacted, outreach efforts.
- Expediting cutting notice process for salvage sales.

State Lands Management (approximately 15,000 acres impacted)

- Initiated and adjusted internal processes to expedite priority salvage sales, including contract extensions with no stumpage increase for loggers assisting on salvage efforts; expediting approval process; contract modifications; re-assessing sale restrictions; moving of resources to evaluate and establish new sales; and direct sales where applicable.
- Hartman Creek State Park clean-up efforts.
- NE District
 - Salvage sales (includes established and to be established): ~2,116 acres
 - Salvage sales established and sold to date: 374 acres
- NW District: 2,156 total salvage acres sold (no additional salvage sales anticipated)
 - Rice Beds Creek Wildlife Area: 1,191 acres
 - Loon Lake Wildlife Area: 965 acres
- Other Projects
 - Several saw crew and dozer projects completed and continued coordination with local towns/county for road and trail clearing.
 - Langlade County: ~10,000 acres of salvage harvest planned, 9 sales sold, 17 sales out for bid
 - Polk County: 237-acre salvage sale (sold)
 - Barron County: 10-acre salvage sale (sold)
 - Town of Georgetown: salvage sale 85 acres

The Division of Forestry is committed to helping to coordinate with our partner agencies and private landowners to address the salvage efforts and public needs going forward.

For specific storm damage inquiries and private forestry assistance, please contact the local forester within the county of interest using our assistance locator on our website at:

<https://mywisconsinwoods.org/foresters/>, or at our DNR website at:
<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestlandowners/locator/>.



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For general storm damage inquiries or updates, please contact Kirsten Held, Division of Forestry Outreach Specialist at (608) 219-9605 or email Kirsten.Held@Wisconsin.gov.

