



CROW WING COUNTY

BRAINERD, MINNESOTA 56401

February 11, 2015

Mark Johnson, Executive Director
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
100 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

RE: Mississippi Northwoods Habitat Complex Protection

Dear Mr. Johnson,

Thank you for inquiry regarding the Mississippi Northwoods property. I appreciate the opportunity to update the Council and clarify the record on this issue.

Crow Wing County Land Services received an application on November 23, 2014 for designation of a multi-use trail system on exiting forest roads and trails located within the Mississippi Northwoods property. This is the first application received by the county seeking to designate multi-use trails within the Northwoods area since acquisition in 2012.

Pursuant to the County Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan, all trail proposals on county managed forest lands are reviewed following a five step process similar to the process utilized by the Department of Natural Resources in evaluating trail proposals on state lands. The county's process is set forth on our website at www.crowwing.us. The Northwoods application is in step one, the preliminary discussion stage with county staff.

All county forest lands are managed under the county's Forest Management Plan to the standards of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® and the Forest Stewardship Council ®. The Mississippi Northwoods Habitat Complex was acquired for the specified purpose of being added to the Crow Wing County forest system. As such, our management of the property is focused on protecting the integrity and longevity of forest lands, habitat, and enhancement of public recreational opportunities.

Crow Wing County continues to view the Mississippi Northwoods as an ideal of example of a utilizing outdoor heritage dedicated funding to protect forest habitat for fish, game, and wildlife while enhancing open access to all areas of the property for fishing and hunting opportunities. I look forward to working with the Council to provide all facts relating this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to request more information.

Sincerely,

Kirk Titus
Land Services Supervisor

cc Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Commissioner Tom Landwehr, Minnesota DNR
Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners