

NEWS



Land Services Department
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CROW WING COUNTY

BRAINERD, MINNESOTA 56401

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 25, 2012

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County Natural Resource Managers Take on New Assignments

Crow Wing County Land Services today announced a new line up of staff responsibilities to better manage recreation trails in the County. “We are recalibrating the focus of our current staff to better serve our customers,” said Kirk Titus, Land Services Supervisor for Public Land Management. “Our county has exceptional recreational trail opportunities, unparalleled in the state. We are charged with managing the trails – both motorized and non-motorized – at an exceptional level to protect our forest resources and maximize opportunities for visitors and residents alike,” he added.

Titus noted the new areas of responsibilities are as follows:

Motorized Trails: Jake Frie, Natural Resource Manager, duties will include motorized trail planning and implementation including feasibility, public consultation and development. Frie will retain his forestry duties managing 33,000 acres of forestland to the forest management standard of the world’s two leading independent forest management certification entities, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forest Stewardship Council. His other responsibilities include forest certification program coordinator, forest road and trail maintenance and classification, public outreach and education.

“We have an excellent comprehensive recreation trail plan in place and that will be the foundation for maintaining, improving, and creating motorized recreation-based opportunities,” stated Jake Frie, Natural Resource Manager. “I look forward to working with the many clubs, organizations, and citizens of this County to execute the plan in that respect.”

Frie has worked as a natural resource manager for the Crow Wing County Land Services for the past 5 years. He has an undergraduate degree (BS) in Biology at Winona State University (2004) and a Masters degree (MS) in Natural Resource Science in Management from the University of Minnesota (2007). He can be reached at 218-824-1354 or by email at jake.frie@co.crow-wing.mn.us

Non Motorized Recreation: Bryan Pike, Natural Resource Manager, will continue to manage non-motorized trail planning and implementation and recreation policy. Pike’s new responsibilities include an increased focus in the Land Asset Management program, where he will administer easements, land exchanges, direct sales, partitions, acquisition, donations and leases. Pike currently manages 28,500 acres of forestland and earned a Bachelor of Science in Forest Resources from the University of Minnesota in 1986 and has worked for the County for the past 24 years. Pike can be reached at 218-824-1353 or by email at bryan.pike@co.crow-wing.mn.us

Forest Inventory: Ryan Simonson, Natural Resource Manager, new assignment will be managing the forest management contracts for inventory, tree planting site preparation and bud capping plus the ecological classification and forest modeling projects. His other responsibilities include forest management on 39,000

acres, forest inventory and technology. Simonson, a graduate of Wisconsin Stevens-Point with a Bachelor of Science in Forest Management, has worked for the county since 2009. Simonson can be reached at 218-824-1355 or by email at ryan.simonson@co.crow-wing.mn.us

On February 4 2012, the County Board approved a Comprehensive Recreation Trails Plan, which was created through a public process involving nine advisory group public meetings in 2010, three public presentations to the county board, three public comment periods of 128 days and 172 written comments from the public that were received and addressed by Land Services staff. The County Comprehensive Recreation Trails Plan:

- Focuses on the recreation trails and facilities under the direct management of Crow Wing County.
- Establishes a consistent and objective planning process for the proposal and development of recreation trails.
- Provides a set of criteria and conditions for evaluating potential trails.
- Establishes a process and tasks for monitoring trail use and coordinating enforcement.
- Sets standards and activities to enhance customer access to trail information and the opportunities Crow Wing County provides.
- Identifies 6 specific near-term trail development opportunities, including key trail links to regional recreation trails.

The County manages 103,000 acres of forest land for timber production and diverse recreational opportunities for multiple users. The sale of timber at public auctions during the year funds the county's management of these lands, while providing revenues to local communities. County forest lands are managed to strict environmental standards established by both the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the Forest Stewardship Council certification standards. For more information, please visit the county website at: www.co.crow-wing.mn.us or call 218-824-1115.

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