



Wisconsin County Forests Association

3243 Golf Course Rd., P.O. Box 70, Rhinelander, WI 54501

(715) 282-5951

[wcfa@frontier.com](mailto:wcfa@frontier.com)

## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 13, 2017

### **Wisconsin County Forests – Open for Ruffed Grouse Hunting**

*New Interactive Web Tool Available to Hunters*

Rhinelander, WI – As the ruffed grouse cycle continues its upward trajectory towards a cyclic population peak in Wisconsin, hunters from all over the country will be seeking new locations to hunt over the next few years. Often overlooked by many grouse hunters are the nearly 2.4 million acres of publically owned county forests in Wisconsin. Twenty-nine individual county forests, found primarily in northern and western Wisconsin and in much of the state’s primary ruffed grouse range, collectively make the county forest system the largest public land base in Wisconsin.

Jane Severt, Executive Director of the Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) states, “Nearly all County Forest lands in Wisconsin are open for ruffed grouse and woodcock hunting. These lands have ongoing forest management programs that include the largest acreage of young forest habitat in the state, approximately 887,000 acres. This young forest habitat provides the critical cover and food resources needed for ruffed grouse and woodcock populations to thrive and ample area for hunters to pursue their prey.”

Since 1985, 30 distinct ruffed grouse and woodcock habitat management areas have been established on Wisconsin County Forests in cooperation with the

Ruffed Grouse Society. Funding and technical advice from RGS has provided the means for the land managers to provide prime habitat for these and other wildlife species that utilize young forest habitats. Though designed to provide essential habitat for the birds and improve recreational hunting opportunities, these management areas are often overlooked and underutilized by hunters not familiar with them. With the help of the Ruffed Grouse Society and the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, this is changing. These organizations have worked with WCFA to develop a web based interactive map tool that grouse and woodcock hunters can use both in their homes or in the field to plan or conduct hunting excursions.

This tool providing in-depth locations and background information on 12 cooperative ruffed grouse habitat management areas covering over 44,000 acres on 12 different Wisconsin County Forests. This tool is housed on the WCFA website at <http://www.wisconsincountyforests.com/grouse> . These areas range in size from 600 to nearly 11,000 acres providing hunters with their choice of hunting opportunities. Some have more extensive hunter walking trail systems while others are more suited for hunters wanting to get off the beaten tract. These sites are located all across northern and western Wisconsin allowing hunters to travel from area to area or concentrate on one or two management areas in a particular region of the state.

Information provided for each management area includes driving instructions, GPS coordinates for trailheads/parking areas, acreage of units, length of hunter walking trails, nearest towns with food, gas or lodging and local contacts for information about the county forest, chamber of commerce and closest veterinary services. In addition, downloadable maps of the individual grouse management areas are provided for each site. These maps identify the management area boundaries, parking lots, and hunter walking trail systems with many including maps with breakdowns of forest types and aspen age classes that should prove very useful to perspective hunters.

“Though these specific 12 grouse management areas are being highlighted under this program, hundreds of thousands of additional acres of young forest habitat are available on other locations on county forests throughout Wisconsin. Grouse and woodcock hunters should have ample opportunities to enjoy their sport across Wisconsin’s County Forests,” reports Eric Holm, Price County Forest Administrator.

Additional information on the Wisconsin County Forest System and links to specific county forests are available on the WCFA website at <http://www.wisconsincountyforests.com/> . This link includes contact information for each county forest administrator’s office whose staff consists of field foresters with a great deal of information about the local county forest they manage.

\*\*\*

*The Wisconsin County Forests Association provides leadership uniting the interests of the world's largest county forest program while ensuring long-term forest health and sustainability. WCFA represents the forestry interests of 29 counties with lands enrolled under Wisconsin's County Forest Law (state statutes §28.10 and §28.11).*

*Information on the Wisconsin County Forests Association can be found at [www.wisconsincountyforests.com](http://www.wisconsincountyforests.com).*

Media Contact:

Gary Zimmer, Assistant Executive Director

Wisconsin County Forests Association

Phone: (715) 612-2013

Email: [wafa2@frontier.com](mailto:wafa2@frontier.com)