

Project Plan: FH-20-830
Section(s): 6, 7, 17, 18, T148N, R32W, in the Three Island GMA
Proposal Name: TIP GMA 2021

This project is based on a continuation of the Three Island Grouse Management Area plan which was prepared in 2014 and implemented in 2015. Management as a Grouse Management Area actually began in 1987 in this area. The 2014 plan was based upon grouse management recommendations by late Gordon Gullion from the University of Minnesota, using modern GIS technology to evaluate habitat changes through time. One of the main goals is to create and maintain a mix of aspen age classes across the area to favor the habitat needs specifically for Ruffed Grouse and in a secondary manner for Deer, Woodcock, and a variety of non-game species which use young forest habitat for part of their annual life needs.

Project actually consists of 9 cutting blocks, totaling 51.7 acres, blocks range from 1.5 to 9.1 acres, scattered across the 4 sections. The following list of blocks is from north to south. Most of the blocks have their block number painted on the boundary where you first are likely to enter the block, to aid in field review, the blocks are numbered 1 – 9 on the map, as follows.

1. Block 0628, in the GMA but not in the Park is located north of the Black Lake road, 6.0 acres. There are 122 trees marked to leave (MTL) and 7 trees for grouse drumming log creation (see notes later in this proposal). As in all the blocks, cut all non-reserved trees 2" plus.
2. Block 0658, in the GMA but not in the Park is located just north of the Black Lake road, 7.7 acres. There are 115 trees MTL and 8 drummers.
3. Block 0750, in the Park portion of GMA south of the Black Lake road, located along a Hunter Walking Trail (HWT), 1.5 acres. There are 19 trees MTL and 2 drummers.
4. Block 0728, in the Park portion of the GMA south of the Black Lake road bordering the east side of the main road/snowmobile trail, 7.2 acres. There are 90 trees MTL and 6 drummers. The boundary makes a big loop around a wetland area which also touches the main road.
5. Block 1830, in the Park portion of the GMA south of the Black Lake road, located west of the snowmobile trail by following a HWT and another woods trail, 5.7 acres. There are 38 trees MTL and 6 drummers. There are 2 small Equipment Restriction Zones (ERZ) marked with orange X's, see ERZ notes later in this supplemental.
6. Block 1749, in the Park portion of the GMA north of the Three Island Rd NE, located east of the snowmobile trail along one of the HWTs, 8.4 acres. There are 94 trees MTL and 8 drummers. There is one small ERZ marked with orange. The east side of this block comes close to private land and their fence line. Contractor is responsible for prompt repair of any accidental fence damage from the logging.
7. Block 1716, in the Park portion of the GMA north of the Three Island Rd NE, located on both sides of the snowmobile trail and along one of the HWTs, 9.1 acres. There are 50

trees MTL and 8 drummers. There is one small ERZ just east of the snowmobile trail and block boundary meanders some other wetland edges.

8. Block 1730, in the Park portion of the GMA north of the Three Island Rd NE, located along a HWT with best access SE from block 1749, 3.8 acres. There are 45 trees MTL and 5 drummers. Equipment would not be allowed between this block and the next one (1750) on the HWT as that trail crosses a small stream with a small culvert not suitable for equipment.
9. Block 1750, in the Park portion of the GMA north of the Three Island Rd NE, east side of the snowmobile trail right at the start of a HWT, 2.3 acres. There are 40 trees MTL and 2 drummers. Do not run equipment between this block and the previous one (1730) on the HWT as that trail crosses a small stream with a small culvert not suitable for equipment.

Boundaries are marked with blue "X" facing into the harvest block, all boundary trees are reserve unless painted CUT below the X.

Trees specifically marked to leave are 613 in number, marked with a single blue paint ring around the stem. These include better oak trees, some Basswood, Ash, and the only White Pine in the blocks.

ERZ are marked with orange X facing out from the protected area, the orange X trees and **all trees in the ERZ are reserve**. This provides protection for isolated wetland areas inside the proposed harvest blocks. (Wetland areas outside of the blocks are protected by the meandered placement of the block boundary.)

Grouse Drumming trees are a key component for grouse habitat. The male grouse use these to perform their mating drumming ritual. Specific trees to make into drumming logs are marked with 3 blue rings. The best results for these are to cut them when all cutting and skidding around them is completed, otherwise the logs sometimes get displaced and need to be repositioned. Cut the drumming trees with a 3 to 6 foot tall stump. Lay the tree so the butt of the log is within 3 feet of the stump. Leave 8 – 16 feet of the log, limbed so it lays flat on the ground. If there is merchantable wood in the rest of the tree, it may be skidded away and utilized. If not merchantable either lop/crush the top to close ground contact or skid it away and dispose of elsewhere. The area within 30' around the drumming log should be clear of any large course woody debris over 3" diameter (to reduce ambush locations by predators).

All trees 2" plus must be felled, to favor maximum aspen suckering. Except of course the marked leave trees.

A winter harvest would be preferred;

- there is less chance of trail damage
- less issues with adjacent wetlands, and
- We get the best aspen suckering response for tree regeneration.

This has the associated issue however of maintaining through access (no blocking of trail by equipment) and a snow cushion on the snowmobile trail. Summer harvest in firm conditions would be allowed.

The bridge over the creek between the 5 north blocks and the 4 south blocks will not support big trucks or heavy equipment. Pickups of 7000# or less can cross however, as does the snowmobile trail grooming equipment.

During most of the year, the snowmobile trail, and in fact all the trails in Three Island Park are closed to motorized recreational use. The snowmobile trail in this portion of the Park is open for ATV access for the Deer hunting season, and for snowmobile use in the winter.

When HWT are used for access, they must be completely free of slash when finished so they can be mowed and maintained as HWTs in the future. The trails were all developed cooperatively with the Ruffed Grouse Society with annual maintenance by the NRM Department.

There would be no activity allowed on this sale from the start of grouse season until the end of the Deer A rifle season.

We require a 10% of bid up value as a performance bond for sales in the Park (which most of this sale is).

The proposal is not located near any designated ski or snowshoe trail.

Block proximity to the snowmobile trail or to designated HWTs is highlighted in the descriptions above. Three of the nine blocks are located along the designated snowmobile trail. As described above, if harvested in the winter through access for snowmobiling would be maintained during operations.

The proposal is not located near any of the designated Legacy areas, we reserve with no harvest in the Park.

Using Grouse Activity Center acreage as a measure of grouse habitat effectiveness is explained in the 2014 Three Island Grouse Management Plan. When the 2014 Grouse Management Area plan was implemented the acreage of Grouse Activity Center was 18.7 acres. Some projects

have been implemented in the years since, and other areas have aged to conditions less useful to grouse so at this time the Grouse Activity Center acreage is 22.6 acres. Implementation of this proposal will create a scattered mosaic of age classes with 77.6 acres meeting Grouse Activity Center criterion.

The Minnesota Natural Heritage data base of known and recorded Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive species was researched and the project is not near nor would it affect any known protected species.

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TIP GMA 2021 Proposal Map

