



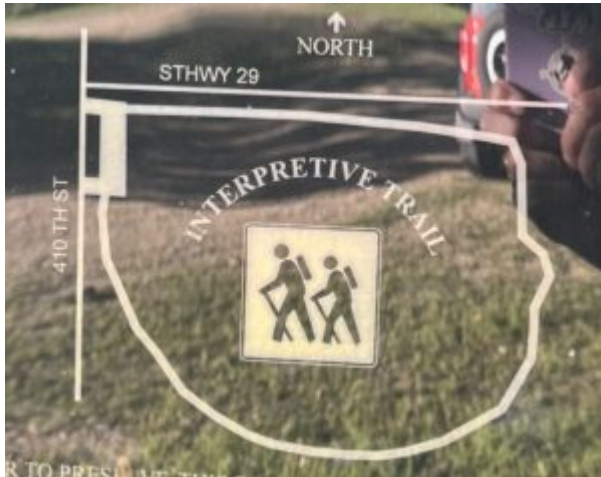
Lee-Kay Family Educational County Forest

Description

Get out and explore! You don't have to go far away to explore new places. There are many free walking trails around. You just have to look in your neighborhood or community. Sometimes there are signs to show the way and sometimes there are not. The important thing is that it is public property and not private property. If it's private property, you need to get permission to walk or use the land.



There is a trail near Spring Valley, Wisconsin on the corner of Highway 29 and 410th Street, that's open to the public from sunrise to sunset. There are signs on the highway to direct you there+ that say, "Pierce County Educational Forest". It's actually named after the family that donated the 40-acre piece of woods to Pierce County, Wisconsin in 2005. It's called the Lee-Kay Family Educational County Forest. There is one trail that goes through the woods. It starts at the north end of the parking lot, and it ends at the south end of the parking lot. The parking lot has enough space for a couple busses to park, if you brought a school group here.



Map of trail

Description of the trail

The trail starts on a dirt path, but it eventually will turn into a wood boardwalk. The boardwalk is nice because it allows you to not walk on the plants and not in the mud. Eventually the boardwalk turns back into a dirt path. Then after a little while, the dirt path will reach the other end of the parking lot. The path is less than a mile long. It is also very flat terrain. You will not need to go up or down any steep hills. This is a good starting path, if you don't have a lot of stamina to walk a long way. You might have to step over or go around a down tree. I'm not sure how often people maintain the path.



dirt path

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Start of the boardwalk

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board walkway

Types of Trees and Forest Management

This area does have a variety of trees all at a variety of different ages. This is due to being under professional forest management since 1957. Every 10 to 15 years a selection of trees is cut down. This type of forest management is called selective cutting. They used this choice over clear cutting for a couple reasons. They wanted to create animal habitats as a main goal. The second goal was to create quality hardwood saw timber. This allowed them to get a good variety of quality hardwood. There are 15 different species of trees along the 0.6-mile trail. Some of the main species of trees are oak, maple, basswood, and ash.

Education of trees and their different uses are the main focus of this 40-acre property. When walking along the trail, there are signs that share information about the different trees. Each sign is next to a tree that the sign describes. Sometimes, the tree might not be there anymore due to storm damage or disease.



Black Ash



Black Cherry



Bur Oak

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Sugar Maple



Red Oak



American Elm



Ironwood



Red Elm



Red Maple

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Black Maple



American Basswood Linden



White Ash



Green Ash



White Oak

Educational Ideas

There is a lot of potential for educational lessons in this forest for preschool all the way through college level students. The possibilities are only limited by your imagination. Adapt the lesson to the age level you have and the state standards you are trying to teach.

- Any type of [tree lesson](#) can be done here such as tree identification, [leaf and bark rubbings](#), [estimate the age of trees](#), the life cycle of a tree, and the benefits it brings to other life in the forest. Use the signs about each tree and do a fill in the blank worksheet to find out what uses each tree has. Do a scavenger hunt with the [leaf](#) pictures and have students find the sign that matches to see what the names are of each tree.



Black Cherry Bark



Ironwood Bark

- Signs of different animals such as tracks, homes, or rubbings.
- Rocks and weathering could be done here because of a waterway that has carved out the ground and moved the rocks.
- Insects that live in a forest. Flip over some logs on the ground or rocks and see what animals you find underneath them.



This forest would be a great addition to add onto a field trip your class is already taking to Crystal Cave or Eau Gauge Recreation Area in Spring Valley, Wisconsin because it's on the way if you are traveling from Minnesota.

Concerns

There are few concerns you might have about this property. The primary concern is not having any bathrooms on or near the property. This is only a concern if you are staying there a long time. The second concern is the trail being muddy in spots. I've been there after a lot of rain and seen how muddy it can get. I would definitely avoid going there to walk, if there has been a lot of rain, or you can always wear waterproof boots. I've also been there when it was dry, so it's normally not muddy. The last concern might be the mosquitos or other annoying bugs. I would bring bug spray with

and apply it if needed. This is something I would always recommend bringing with you, if you're out walking in nature.

Rules

- No ATVs
- No Camping
- No Tree Stands
- No Horses
- No Campfires
- No Tree Steps

Category

1. Education
2. Hiking

Tags

1. #education
2. #forestry
3. #hike
4. #Pierce County
5. #trees

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