

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY  
FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT  
WINTER RECREATION**

Cross-country skiing is a popular activity. Over fifty miles of trails offer pristine scenery and challenging terrain.

**Skiers should take snow conditions into consideration, as District trails are not groomed.**

- ❖ Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve has 4 miles.
- ❖ Hononegah Forest Preserve has 2.7 miles.
- ❖ Kieselburg Forest Preserve has 2.9 miles.
- ❖ Kishwaukee Gorge Forest Preserve has 3.1 miles.
- ❖ Kishwaukee River Forest Preserve has 1.8 miles.
- ❖ Espenscheid Memorial Forest Preserve has 1.6 miles.
- ❖ Pecatonica River Forest Preserve has 9.8 miles in the lower portion.
- ❖ Oak Ridge Forest Preserve has 5.3 miles and connects to Deer Run Forest Preserve **if the river can be safely crossed.**
- ❖ Deer Run Forest Preserve has 9.4 miles.
- ❖ Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve has 5.8 miles.
- ❖ Sugar River Forest Preserve has 5.9 miles.
- ❖ Sugar River Alder Forest Preserve has 4.9 miles.
- ❖ Colored Sands Forest Preserve has 2.8 miles.



**SNOWMOBILING**

Snowmobiles are allowed on **designated trails** only when four inches of snow cover is on 80% of the designated trail or area in these preserves:

- Pecatonica River
- Pecatonica Wetlands
- Four Lakes
- Sugar River
- Two Rivers
- Seward Bluffs



**Snowmobiles cannot be on the trails after 10 PM. Refer to our policy.**

Winter recreation (cross-country skiers, snow shoe, and skating) are allowed in the preserves after dark, although some of the preserve gates will be locked. Many of the access roads allow room for skiers to park their cars off the roadway in front of the locked gates including: Kieselburg, Hononegah, Kishwaukee River (west), Seward Bluffs, Sugar River, Pecatonica River, Deer Run, and Kishwaukee Gorge. Gates will be open at Oak Ridge and Blackhawk Springs (Perryville).

**Ice fishing is allowed “at your own risk” at Four Lakes and Trask Bridge.**



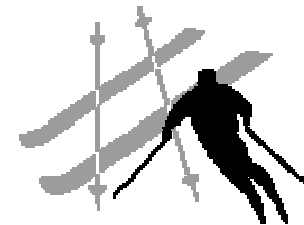
**HOW TO SKI**

Shorter skis (ski length is shoulder to head high) and taller supportive boots with integral binding system make cross-country skiing easier to learn.

The diagonal stride, or “classic” technique, is efficient and smooth. Its name comes from the alternate movement of arms and legs (the same movement used in walking but more elongated). Equipment is lightweight, with “skinny skis” and boots that look much like running shoes.

Skating is a technique where the skier pushes the skis to the side and glides. It is more dynamic, swifter, and more physically demanding. While it’s the technique of choice for racers, skating can become an enjoyable part of any skier’s technical repertoire.

Either style can be used on uphill, flats, and gentle downhill. Ascents can also be made using the herringbone (effective but ungainly), or the sidestep (practical but boring), or by switchbacking. Backcountry skiing is more rugged and rustic, using wider skis and sturdier boots.

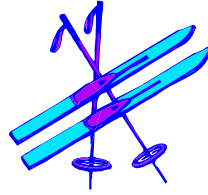


## PPAREL

The trick is to retain warmth while allowing perspiration to evaporate. This is achieved by layering clothing to adjust to heat loss.

Aside from buying warm, comfortable, “breathable” boots, the best thing for your feet is layering, too. Try wearing thin polypropylene liners under a pair of wool or wool-blend socks. If your toes are susceptible to cold, resist the temptation to put on too many socks—you’ll only restrict circulation, making feet colder. Instead invest in a pair of light overboots, and occasionally swig something warm, sweet, and non-alcoholic to help cut the chill. Mittens are best if you’re prone to cold hands, as they allow fingers to share body heat. Gloves are better for precise ski pole control. For chilly weather, look for gloves with leather palms, a long gauntlet at the wrist and a light lining. Don’t use too heavy a pair or they’ll be sweat-soaked. Beware the sun. It’s amazingly easy to burn your skin, particularly on a hazy day, so wear sunscreen—you’ll still get a tan. Sunglasses are vital—snowblindness makes your eyes feel as though they’ve been sandpapered and can damage corneas.

Protecting or covering one’s head is vital winter comfort. Chilling problems occur more often than overheating. A useful adage to remember is “if your toes are cold, put on a hat.” Its sequel is “if you’re still cold, put on another hat!” Layer the hats, with itch-free lightweight polypropylene or tight-woven wool next to the skin and a heavier model above.



## FOR YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY AND THE PRESERVE’S PROTECTION

Remember...no matter what activities you intend to enjoy, proper planning will make a big difference in your personal comfort. **In emergencies call 9-1-1, non-emergencies call (815) 282-2600. It would be a good idea to bring a cell phone and familiarize yourself with the trail system to map out your route. Let someone know where you are going and when you will return.**

The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District is committed to enabling all to enjoy forest preserves and invites people of all abilities to discover the benefits of recreation at our sites, facilities, and programs. If you need special accommodations in order to access a preserve or facility, please contact the ADA coordinator by calling WCFPD Headquarters 815/877-6100.

For maps showing locations of forest preserves, visit our website at [www.wcfpd.org](http://www.wcfpd.org).

For free maps and more information, call the District office at (815) 877-6100.



# WINTER RECREATION



WINNEBAGO  
COUNTY  
FOREST  
PRESERVE  
DISTRICT



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### Our Mission

*To assure the public access to permanent natural lands and areas for safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation and education.*