

# 2024 Canoe Landing Report

## Brule River State Forest

By Anthony Godby

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### **Summary:**

The strategies I used to educate the public of the Bois Brule River rules, were to develop positive relationships with Canoe rental staff, talking with visitors with paddle watercrafts, fishing gear, and engaging with children. Even though I am one person, I did my best to reach to every person who were visiting the Bois Brule River.

Generally, I would greet people with a kind hello if I saw they had a watercraft, or anything related to the river. I would ask about the main topics of any glass, tying things to the boat, and ensuring their security while being on the river. This would include of proper equipment such as tie downs, PFDs, and respecting the river. I would always emphasize to keep the noise level down because of private properties and to exit their craft only if in emergency or it is a public area. I will also tell them if it looks like private property to assume it is and continue, it is better to assume it is private than not. I would also talk about keeping any empty cans or liquid containers that are not in use to be put back in their respective containers to keep litter from spilling out into the river.

The canoe and kayak rental company and I got to know each other quite well over my time of working on the Brule River. On occasion I would have new visitors come onto the river who would tell me about how the rental company said for them not to worry about tying their items down. This confused me since I knew that they knew better to not say that since they have been working this river for some time. I would even check in with any of the rental workers to make sure there wasn't any miscommunication. I would assure any newcomers that regardless of what you have heard that I was the final say of what you can and can't do on the river. I have respect for Erin on being able to continue this business even though it can get stressful most days. He and his two boys are quite the hard workers. Normally I would be introduced by the rental workers, but even if I wasn't I would greet each group with a kind good morning.

When it came to talking to kids, I would hand out to the kids a scavenger hunt book and or of info cards to collect so they could get more excitement out of a paddle trip. I would do my best to excite the kids about learning of the area around them so that maybe one day they could have a passion for nature around them. It made me so happy to see their smiles so bright when they would learn about facts that many of their friends or family may not know about. If I can inspire a child to find a passion for the natural resources, then I truly have done my part for future generations.

## **Data:**

Topics covered Verbally.

Month	Contacts	Beverages	PFDs	Litter	Fish Regs	Inflatables
June	361	42	42	40	16	3
July	742	77	75	73	12	5
August	850	88	88	88	18	6
September	326	36	36	36	8	1
Totals	2279	243	241	237	54	15

Information Handed out.

Month	Glass Found	Fish regs	Visitor Info	Expl Book	Wild Cards	Other (string etc.)
June	3	5	16	3	10	1
July	0	1	21	5	10	9
August	7	4	19	18	23	13
September	3	3	6	11	11	3
Totals	13	13	62	37	54	26

## **Overall Impressions:**

Majority of people I had talked with were respectful and easy to talk with. Many were honest and understanding when I would explain the why's of rules. Many expressed their appreciation for me being out on the landings ensuring the cleanliness of the river and respect for the area surrounding the river. I would have some new visitors who would express how they read online the rules which brought me joy even if I reiterated the rules. I would often have some side jokes that would help lighten the mood so that I don't seem as daunting.

On occasion I would get visitors who would say they have been on this river for X number of years, but I would always make sure to check them before they launched for, I have caught some not following the rules. I have gotten some push back for talking about fines and the why's, but I always made sure to stay firm with what I would say no matter how upset they would get.

It was very rare to encounter those who were uncooperative, and I would alert the warden and other State Forest staff about these instances.

### **Other Accomplishments/ Maintenance:**

- Connected with Jenn on materials she created and are needed for landings.
- Cleaned and sanitized restrooms
- Cleaned landings. Campground, angler lots, etc.
- Assisted with restocking campground info and reservations.
- Provided customer service at and near ranger station.
- Put together wildcards to hand out to children while at the park and encourage families to visit the station to collect more variations.
- Put up new signage at kiosks if needed.
- Stained State Forest signs to help keep the park looking in good condition.

### **Ideas/suggestions:**

- A better way to present materials for landing host so that it sticks out like a sore thumb for visitors to see.
- Be able to sell vehicle passes for when office is closed.
- Signs of fines at canoe landings under the rules.

### **My Humblest gratitude:**

I have tried to get a foot in the door with the DNR for a couple years. I graduated with a Bachelor's in Biology and a Minor in Environmental Science. I've applied unsuccessfully to multiple positions in the past and was so happy to receive the acceptance call for this position. I always told many of my friends and family that I would live or like to live in northern Wisconsin. I cannot thank the DNR and the people of the Bois Brule River who have helped support this position. I do plan to stick around in the area so hopefully next year I will be in this position again. I hope that I made quite the difference and that I made an impression to everyone so that I would be able to come back in the future.