

GOOD BOUNDARY LINES MAKE GOOD NEIGHBORS

Okay, so that's not the most original thought that I've had lately, but it does define my feelings about the value of maintaining the boundary lines that surround GWP Scout Reservation. Just as it's important to ensure that the forest is healthy and safe, it's necessary to protect the GWP forest from those who would accidentally or purposefully trespass on the property for any reason. An important part of the GWP Forest Stewardship Plan is the periodic maintenance of the camp's boundary lines by painting marks along the lines that let others know where the boundaries are.

In 2003 the GWP Forestry Committee recommends that the Council begin marking its boundary lines. The following article describes the recently-passed state law that supports and establishes that process for private forest landowners:

“POSTED PURPLE”

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Many states have laws providing a certain color paint to be used in place of costly signs for posting property. You may have noticed “posted purple” paint on trees and rocks in Arkansas and wondered what all the marks were for. These marks, when placed properly, are assumed to be posted - no trespass signs.

The state of Texas recently has enacted a law (Texas Penal Code Article 30.05) providing for the use of purple paint to post property boundaries (Texas, 2002). The use of written posted signs are still recommended at access points, such as gates. Unlike signs, marks are not easily removed or torn down and do not have to be replaced often. In order to post your property using this paint method, the following is required:

- Place purple paint marks on trees or fence posts
- Marks must be vertical lines at least 1” wide and 8” high
- The bottom of the mark must be between 3’ and 5’ of the ground
- Marks must be placed at locations readily visible to person approaching property
- Marks must be no more than 100’ apart on forestland and no more than 1000’ apart on non-forestland

The major drawbacks to this method are concerns over excessive amounts of paint on trees ruining the visual quality of our rural areas and the public's lack of knowledge of the law. Each landowner will have to make his or her own decision on whether or not the paint is visually offensive to them and their property. With increased use of this marking practice, and perhaps some publicity from landowner associations, the public should become aware of the meaning of “purple” boundaries, making them as effective as posted signs.