

Freeman Kame Meagher Woods: Mapper/Field Checking Notes- October 2017

Orienteering Map –3 square kilometers - Scale: 1:7500 (14x17) - 3 meter contour interval. Located between I-90 and Freeman Road; north and west of Gilberts, IL. Freeman Kame Meagher (Tomo Chi Chi Knolls) Forest Preserve is a Forest Preserve District of Kane County (FPDKC) property. The mapped area represents about one-half (the southern half divided by Freeman Road) of the total Freeman Kame preserve: The northern section is mostly a nature preserve. Mapped area is a combination of hardwood and pine stands, open prairie, large and small marshes and ponds. Though out the preserve there are kames - glacial hills - of varying heights - up to 80 feet (23m) - and vegetation coverage. The dominant feature on the north and south sides of the preserve are the large Kames: the southern kames are in open prairie and partially wooded while the northern kames are mostly wooded with several ticket areas. [Those of you who have liked “mud-runs” may remember from around 2000 - 2011 the “Merrell Down & Dirty Mud Run near Gilberts at Indian Hills Farm: This the same place – southern Kame area - where that popular race was held. The high Kames are clearly visible from I-90.]

Mapping Notes. Base map created by Joe Sehnal from sources: Google Earth, Kane County GIS using OCAD during Fall Winter 2016. Field checking started winter 2016 and was completed in June 2017. OCAD base map converted to OOmapper for final mapping at the start of field checking. Map was complete using OOmapper in October 2017.

During the field checking period the FPDKC made several improvements – parking area, shelter and trail - and land acquisitions that expanded their property especially on the south. A former mushroom farm and two private residences were razed. During the winter of 2015 and 2016 a thorough clearing of the thick wooded areas in the north Kame area was conducted. This past winter the wood clearing continued into the west central sections of the preserve; result a dramatic change from impassable to almost too clear! In all about 1 sq km has been cleared since 2015 to date.

Tomo Chi Chi Knolls until recently was a Boy Scout managed site (West Suburban Council); it is now a Kane County Youth Campground area, still used by the Scouts, but open to any community group for reservations. All the current active campsites are close to the lodge. However, though out the center and near south areas there is evidence of remote campsites, blazed trail system and a couple of pit toilet ruins; all are in light green to overgrown areas and the trails are mapped as “indistinct trails”. There are also a couple of stone foundation ruins - evidence of farm more than a campground. Evidence of old roads is mapped as a ride. Also of note though out the open areas in the south are the barriers formally used for cross country equestrian events [Also may be used during the Mud-runs?!].

Vegetation. The following vegetation features are mapped throughout the area: Distinctive trees (leaf bearing and evergreen (distinct dotted boundary), rootstocks, and small thickets. There are two separate symbols used for distinctive trees: for the hardwoods the green circle symbol is used, and for the distinctive evergreen trees and small thickets (a green dot is used). Significant Fallen/Dead Trees (1 meter trunk diameter partial or full upright with roots in the ground) are mapped using a green “X”. Rootstocks (Fallen tree root ball - 1.5 meter minimum) are mapped using a brown “X”. The hardwood and pine sections that are mapped as medium to dark green you will want to avoid. The light green while slow in places can be to pass through fairly quickly. The white woods are very good. The green slashes are mostly low thorny bramble growth.

Private Property borders the mapped area on the north and west and southwest sides primarily. One significant 300 sq meters of private property is in the center of map. All the private property if marked with the red vertical strips or with the green “settlement” designation. The east boundary is primarily a railroad track however on the southwest side of the map the usable mapped area border a large marsh area and a small north south stream.

Roads, Rides and Trails. Around the campground and lodge there is a good trail and open mowed path system. There are two main trail loops from the lodge one north uses the access road also and one to the south each approx. 1 mile in length. Several very minor trails -mapped as indistinct - intersect with the south trail. The large private property in the south center is the predecessor owner of much of the land on the south of the map. One minor road that connected to the east to the railroad has almost totally disappeared where it still in evidence it is marked as a ride.

Fences. One fence is marked as uncrossable due to its height and topping of barbed wire; this fence parallels the main entrance road turns 90 degrees and heads east to cross a large marsh. Other, not all, fences marked as crossable are 4 to 5 feet high metal lattice– cross close to the posts. Most of these are along the field and forest edges on the south part of the map. There is a fence that parallels the central section of the road that divides the southern fifth of the mapped area east to west that is high but easy to cross – rather pass through!

Significant Trees. Significant hardwood (leaf-bearing) trees are marked with a green circle. Significant pines (needle or evergreens) and small thickets are marked with a green dot. Significant Fallen/Dead Trees (1 meter trunk diameter partial or full upright with roots in the ground) are mapped using a green “X”. Rootstocks (Fallen tree root ball - 1.5 meter minimum) are mapped using a brown “X”.

Open woods can be pine stands or hardwood. The pines are mapped with distinct boundary dots on the map. Wooded areas mapped as light green can be moved through quickly, but may contain some patches of the thorny stuff. The medium green represents areas that vary greatly from walk to fight and should be avoided. Tight vertical green striped areas should be treated like the medium green – it will slow you down and could be painful.

Boulders. (.5 meter minimum; mapped with black dot) Boulder clusters, fields and stony ground are mapped using normal black symbol standards. (This area has the largest boulder I have seen in the Chicagoland area: 2.5 meters – a glacial erratic.)

Depressions/Pits. Small, brown “U” symbol on the map most are 1 meter in depth and 2 meters in diameter. Larger depressions are mapped using the brown intermediate or full contour line with a hatch mark indicating the center lower part of the depression. Pits, can generally be the size of a depression, but with steeper sides, marked with a brown (earth) or black (stony) “V”.

Wet Areas are mapped with standard blue symbols. All streams are small and crossable. Dry ditches, mapped in brown, can be a minor erosion gully, some are rather shallow or manmade shallow cut. However, in general marshes - mapped as crossable, seasonal or uncrossable - and ponds are additional dominant features throughout the preserve.

Except the uncrossable marshes, most marshes, ponds & streams are dry and crossable.

