

SUBJECT: Land Acquisition – Statewide Natural Area – Iron County

FOR: JUNE 2013 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Douglas J Haag

SUMMARY: The Department has obtained an agreement to purchase 656.38 acres of land from Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) for \$281,000 for the Statewide Natural Area in Iron County. The item is being submitted because purchase price is more than \$150,000.

The property is located in Iron County about 9 miles south of the Village of Mercer in the Town of Sherman. The property is bordered by Department lands to the southeast and to the north and will be part of the Lehto Lake State Natural Area. The property consists primarily of lowland keg and marsh, with ridges and islands of upland woodlands. Timber types include stands of northern hardwood, white birch, swamp conifers and aspen. The property includes Leach Lake, a 4.2 acre seepage lake. It is also adjacent to Department ownership in Lehto Lake; a 52-acre spring-fed lake which is a rare type for this region.

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands [BCPL] was established in Article X of the State Constitution to receive and manage federal land grants for the benefit of public education. The Board is comprised of the Attorney General, the Secretary of State and the State Treasurer. Pursuant to implementation of 2005 Act 352, passed unanimously by both houses of the legislature, the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands has sold over 10,000 acres of land to the Department of Natural Resources, the vast majority of which are highly ranked natural areas within existing DNR project boundaries. The law directs BCPL to use the proceeds from these sales to purchase working forests for timber management and income generation for schools. The benefits of this legislation include increased timber management efficiency; increased public access; reduced forest fragmentation, increased tax receipts for local municipalities, and the permanent protection of high quality natural areas. All BCPL purchases are evaluated based on Board approved criteria in accordance with the legislation. Using this authority, BCPL has increased public access to BCPL lands by 16%, decreased non income producing wetlands by 17% and increased timber producing lands by 10%. All BCPL lands are open for hunting, fishing, trapping and public recreation.

The Lehto Lake State Natural Area supports a vast peatland complex with swamp islands of dense second-growth fire-origin hemlock and white pine forest. Stands of white spruce and balsam fir are also present. A small but outstanding old-growth hemlock stand with super-canopy white and red pine occurs south of Lehto Lake. There is an abundance of dense pole sized hemlock and this is one of the few northern Wisconsin sites where hemlock is successfully regenerating. Aquatic features include Lehto Lake and bog, West Randall Lake, Leach Lake and Randall Creek. Northern sedge meadow, alder thicket, and swamp hardwoods are found along the riparian corridor. West of Randall Lake is a shore fen that supports a floating mat with large populations of the pink bog orchid and dragon's mouth orchid. The site also harbors an excellent diversity of neotropical migrant birds including scarlet tanager, black and white warbler, pine warbler, blackburnian warbler and Nashville warbler while the large pines surrounding the lake support bald eagles.

The Department recommends the acquisition of this parcel to provide additional opportunities for public recreation and to better promote the natural and scenic resources of this project that include an important wetland and lake community.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of Board of Commissioners of Public Lands 656.38 acres of land for \$281,000 for the Statewide Natural Area in Iron County.

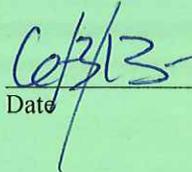
LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|----------|
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Fiscal Estimate Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environmental Assessment of Impact Statement Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No <input type="checkbox"/> | Background Memo | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Attached |

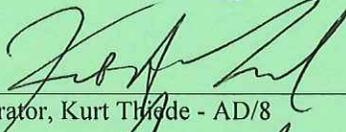
APPROVED:



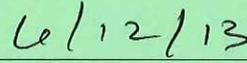
Acting Real Estate Director, Douglas J Haag - LF/6



Date



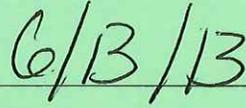
Administrator, Kurt Thiede - AD/8



Date



Secretary, Cathy Stepp - AD/8



Date

- cc: S. Miller - LF/6
- D. Haag - LF/6
- L. Ross - AD/8
- D. Schuller - PR/6
- P. Bruggink - NOR - RHINELANDER

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 4, 2013 FILE REF: NA 20105
 TO: Scott Walker
 FROM: Cathy Stepp
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands Tract, File # NA 20105,

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Statewide Natural Area
 Iron County

Grantor:

Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
 Attn: Tia Nelson
 101 E. Wilson Street
 Madison, WI 53708

Acres: 656.38Price: \$281,000Appraised Value: \$295,000 and \$267,400Interest: Fee Title PurchaseImprovements: NoneLocation: The property is located in Iron County 9 miles south of MercerLand Description: The subject land is levelCovertypes Breakdown:

Type	Acreage
Lowland Woodland	78.77
Wetland	442.4
Brush	22.32
Water	4.2
Urban / Developed	1.3
Upland Woodland	107.39
Total:	656.38

Zoning: ForestryPresent Use: Public recreation and forestryProposed Use: Public recreation and conservationTenure: 140 yearsProperty Taxes: ExemptOption Date: May 16, 2013

Stewardship Land Access: This property will be open to the public for all nature based outdoor recreational activities to include hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and cross country skiing.

2. JUSTIFICATION:

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3. LAND MANAGEMENT:

This property will be managed as part of the Lehto Bog State Natural Area by Endangered Resources program staff with current funding resources. This tract is almost entirely bog or hemlock with small inaccessible islands of upland pines and spruce, which requires virtually no management. Invasive plant and animal species are unknown. Boundary identification is the only known management need. Annual maintenance costs are anticipated to be minimal.

4. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$2,000,000	\$362,000

5. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE STATEWIDE NATURAL AREA:

Established: 1972
Acres Purchased to Date: 36,674.82
Acquisition Goal: 41,000
Percent Complete: 89.45 %
Cost to Date: \$31,355,349.55

6. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Michael Augustyn
Valuation Date: April 22, 2013
Appraised Value: \$295,000
Highest and Best Use: Recreational - forestry

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 656.38 acres @ \$450 per acre: \$295,000
- b. market data approach used, 4 comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$422 - \$493 per acre

Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter - May 30, 2013

APPRAISAL 2:

Appraiser: Lee Steigerwaldt
Valuation Date: April 17, 2013
Appraised Value: \$267,400
Highest and Best Use: Recreation

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 656.38 @ \$410 per acre: \$267,400
- b. market data approach used, 5 comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$312 - \$547

Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter - May 30, 2013

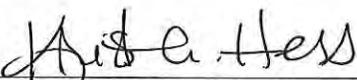
RECOMMENDED:



Douglas J Haag, Acting Real Estate Director

6/3/13

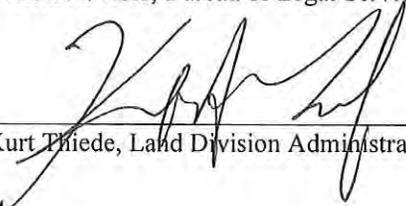
Date



Kristin A. Hess, Bureau of Legal Services

6/7/13

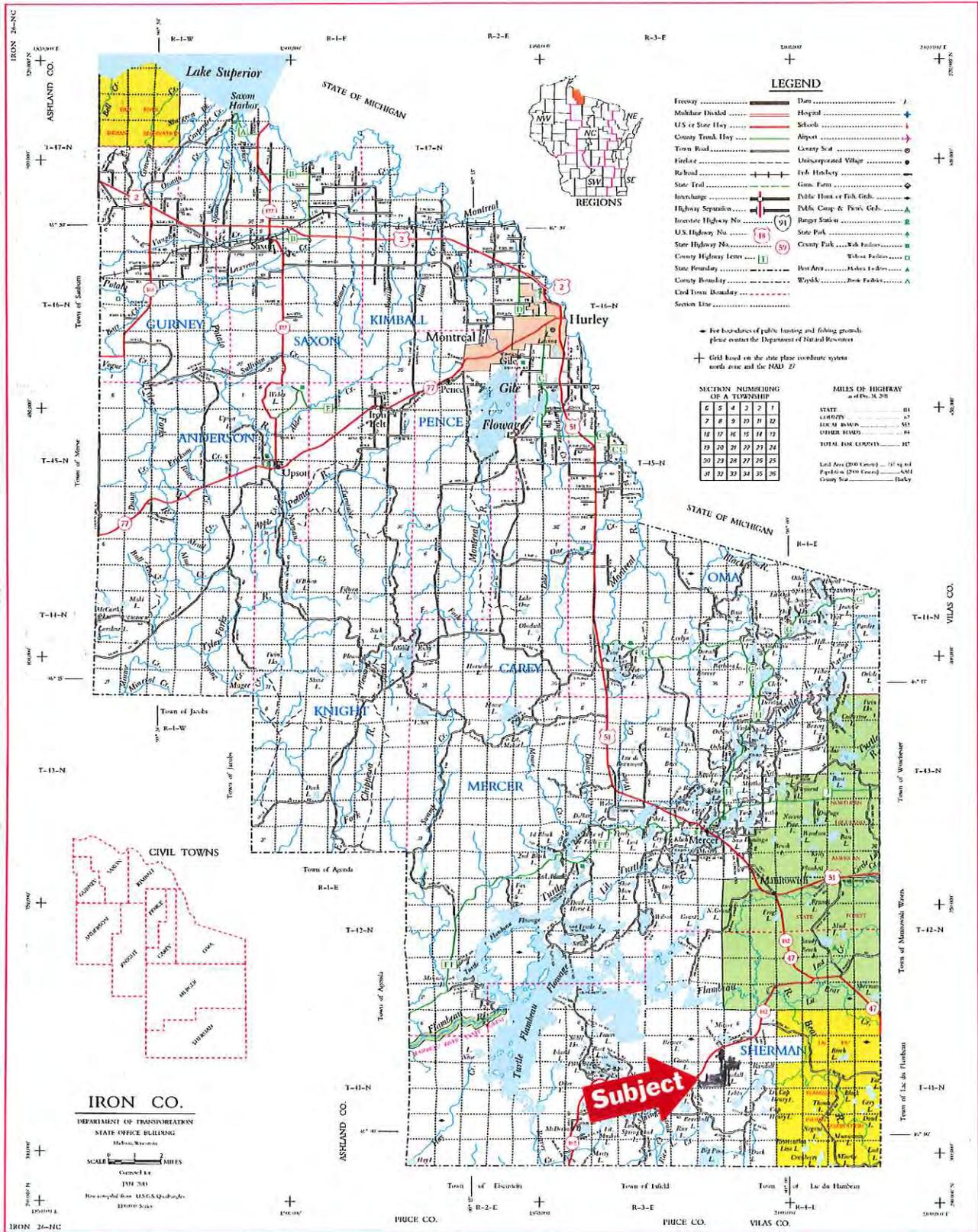
Date



Kurt Thiede, Land Division Administrator

6/12/13

Date



**Board of Commissioners
of Public Lands - Fee
Statewide
Natural Area**

NA 20105

T41N R3E Sec 12 & 13
T41N R4E Sec 7 & 18

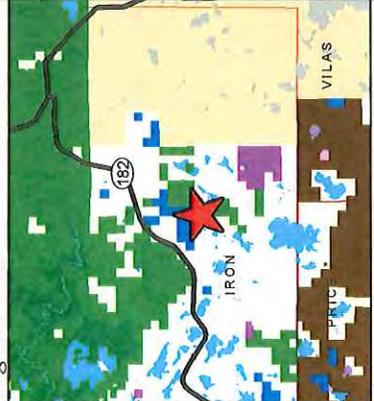
Town of Sherman
Iron County



Subject

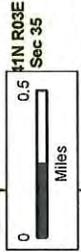
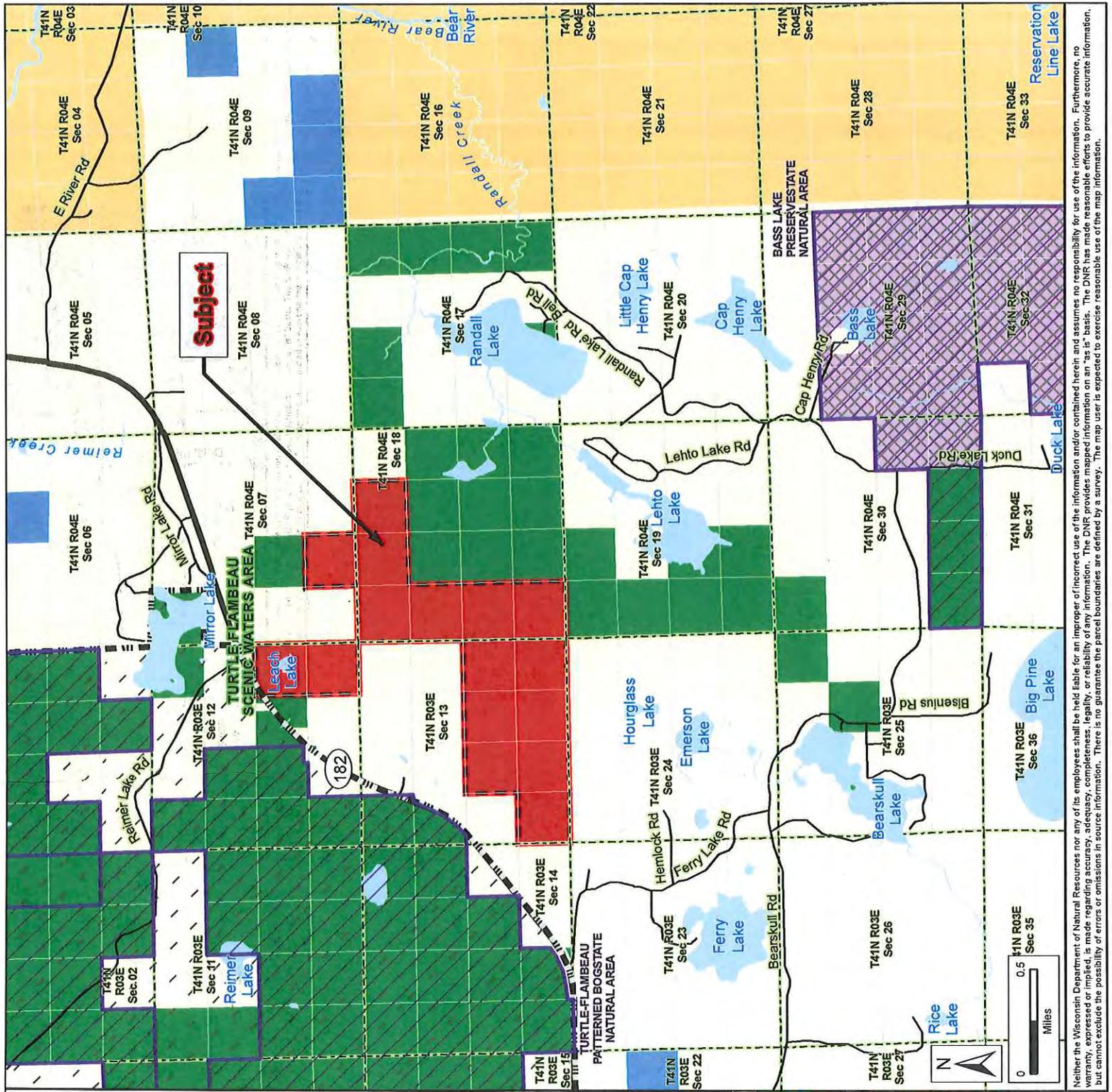
- DNR Fee Title Land
- DNR Easement Land
- DNR Easement (Closed to Public Access)
- DNR Project Boundary
- Tribal Land
- Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
- National Forest
- State Natural Area
- PLSS Section Line
- QQ Section Boundary

Regional View



Location of Property

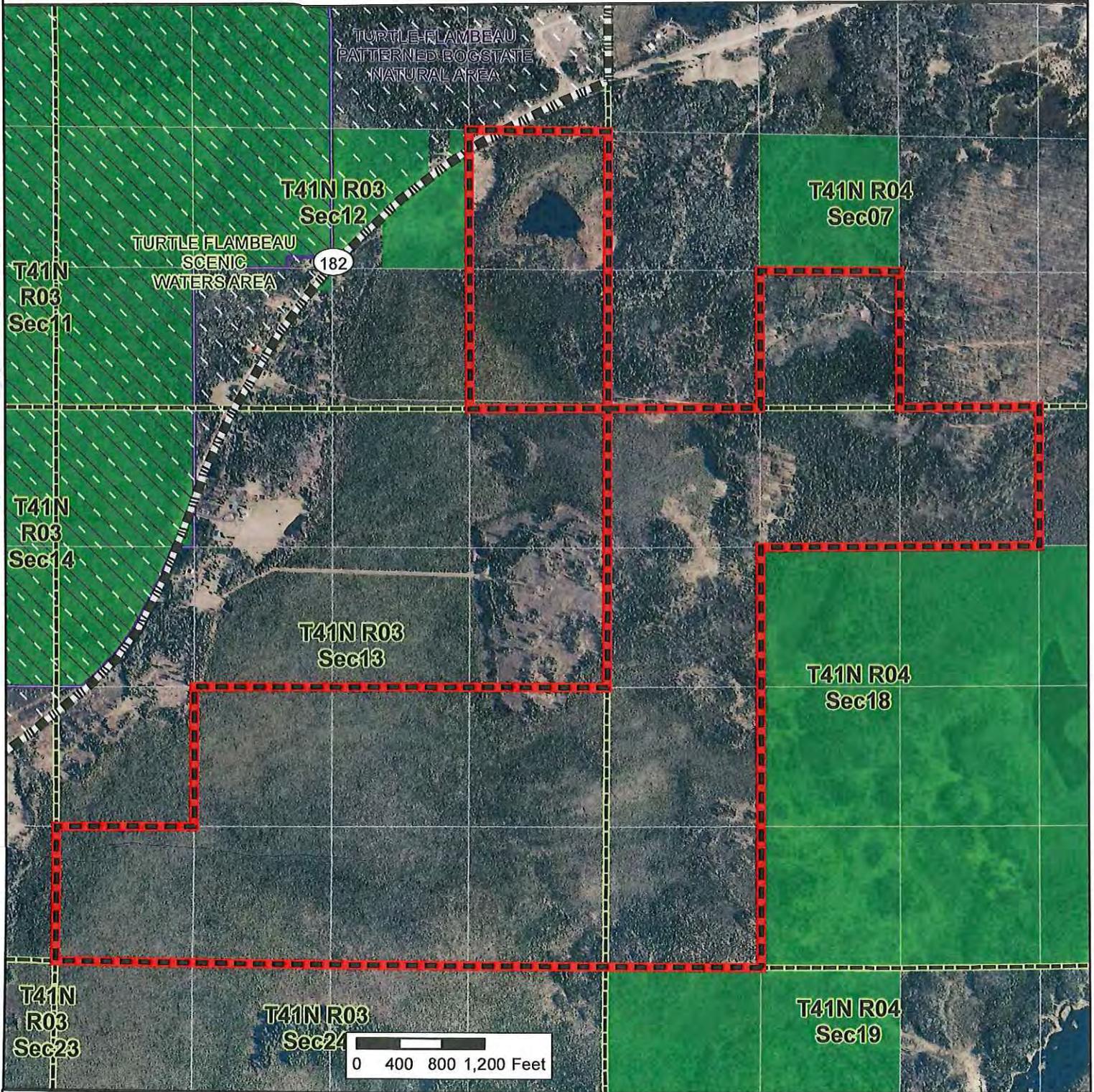
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bureau of Facilities of Lands
Map Created: May 29, 2013 .kmh



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Board of Commissioners of Public Lands - Fee

T41N R3E Sec 12 & 13, T41N R4E Sec 7 & 18, Town of Sherman, Iron County



Statewide Natural Area



Subject

DNR Fee Title Land

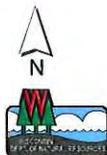
State Natural Area

DNR Easement Land

Section Line

DNR Project Boundary

QQ Section Lines



May 29, 2013 kmh

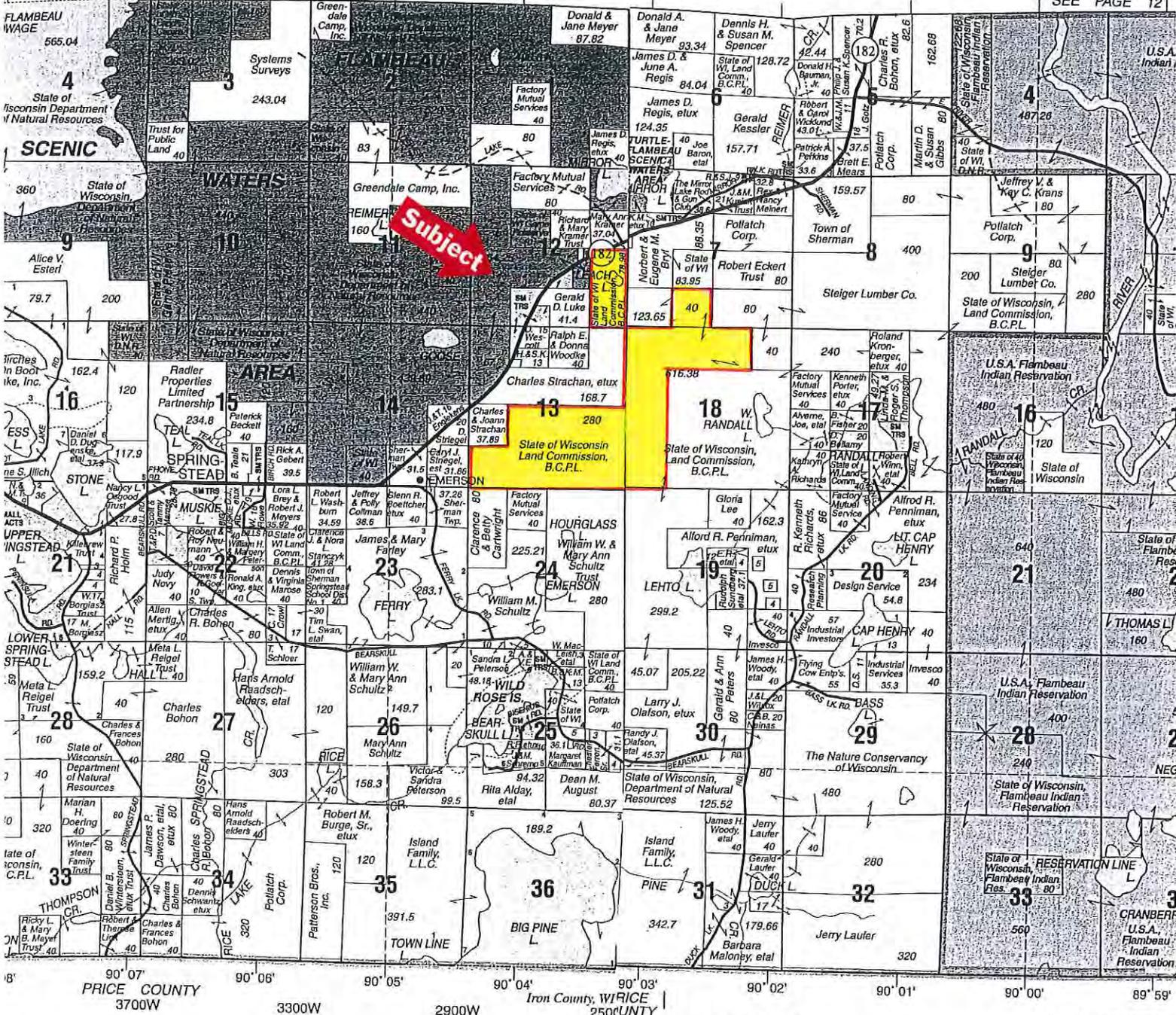
Real Estate Section
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

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T.41N.-R.3E. SOUTHEAST SHERMAN

SEE PAGE 18

SEE PAGE 12 |



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VILAS COUNTY