Form 1100-001N (Rev. 09/14) Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Item No: 2.B.2.

Natural Resources Board Agenda Item

SUBJECT: Land Sales – Phase III

FOR: OCTOBER 2016 BOARD MEETING
TO BE PRESENTED BY: Terry Bay, Bureau Director

SUMMARY:

The 2013-15 state biennial budget directed the Natural Resources Board to make 10,000 acres of land available for sale by June 30, 2017. This new law specifies that the net proceeds from the sale of these lands will be used to repay outstanding public debt related to the Knowles Nelson Stewardship program. The new law only affects lands located outside of official project boundaries established prior to May 1, 2013. A project boundary is created by a feasibility study, master plan or other official action by the Natural Resources Board. The Department has over 600 named projects with established project boundaries. The Department owns approximately 1,515,232 acres in fee title ownership and 303,561 acres in easements.

The sale of land under this new law will allow the Department to:

- Realign land ownership for more efficient management
- Repurpose lands that don't serve the Department's mission
- Work with other organizations to meet common property and conservation goals
- Resolve boundary and access issues

To implement this new law the Department developed a subchapter to the Real Estate Handbook that outlines the process the Department and the Natural Resources Board will follow in order to comply with this law. The Department held five public information meetings on October 28, 2013 to share the draft sales policy with the public and gather comments on the new policy. The sale policy was also placed on the Department's public policy website for three weeks and comments were accepted during that period. The final draft of the land sale policy was presented and approved by Natural Resources Board in December of 2013.

In addition to these efforts to involve and inform the public about this new program the Department developed a land sale webpage. This web page allows the Department to share new information about the land sale program as well as specific information about parcels being proposed for sale, parcels actually for sale and the requirements for bidding on any specific parcel being offered for sale. The Department also shares information with the general public through govdelivery.com. Over 8000 people have signed up to receive email updates on the land sale program in this manner.

For phase three of the land sale effort the Department identified 128 parcels for possible sale and placed maps of the parcels on the website for public view. In addition to the involvement of the public the Department conducted field reviews to evaluate the conservation and recreation values of each parcel. During the field review process an additional 26 parcels of land were identified for possible sale. The extensive external and internal involvement in this phase of the land sale process has led the Department to make the following recommendation to the Natural Resources Board:

- Offer for sale 22 parcels totaling 1331 acres: Accessible parcels for government sale only with restrictions
- Offer for sale 7 parcels totaling 307 acres: Landlocked parcels for government sale only with restrictions
- Offer for sale 31 parcels totaling 791 acres: Landlocked parcels for private sale to adjoining landowners
- Offer for sale 33 parcels totaling 1130 acres: Accessible parcels for public sale to the general public

In addition to these recommendations to sell land the Department is recommending that 57 parcels totaling 2457 acres be retained by the Department for conservation purposes. Throughout the review process 4 parcels were removed from sale consideration due to restrictions on the parcels.

In June of 2014 the Natural Resources Board approved 1407 acres of land for sale. In February 2016 the Natural Resources Board approved 5633 acres of land for sale. This brings the total acreage approved for sale to 7040 acres. If the Natural Resources Board approves the Department's recommendations outlined above the total acreage approved for sale will be 10,599 acres. Marketing of all the parcels approved to be offered for sale by the Natural Resources Board will be ongoing through June 30, 2017.

The Department's specific recommendation for each parcel is attached for your review.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approves the Department's specific recommendations to offer for sale 93 parcels of land totaling approximately 3559 acres under the authority of s. 23.145 Wis. Stats.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS (Check all that are applicable):

☐ **Background Memo**

☒ **Maps and Documents**

Approved By	Signature	Date
Terry H. Bay Bureau Director	Terry Bay	10/6/16
Sanjay Olson Division Administrator		10/7/16
Cathy Stepp, Secretary		10/10/16