

**SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION - STATEWIDE NATURAL AREAS - ST. CROIX COUNTY**

**FOR: JUNE BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Richard Steffes

**SUMMARY:** The Department has obtained an option to purchase 10 acres of land from Dorothy Berggren for \$190,000 for the Statewide Natural Area program, Apple River Canyon in St. Croix County. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000.

The subject is located in the western part of St. Croix County a mile east of the Minnesota border. The parcel includes 650 feet of frontage along the west bank of the Apple River and adjoins state-owned lands to the west and north. Most of the 10 acres is mature oak hardwoods with cliff side vegetation also present on the north riparian zone of the Apple River. Ownership will protect the natural values of the site for future generations, allow natural area management, prevent incompatible development within the project boundary, and provide opportunities for public recreation and natural area research and education.

The Statewide Natural Area program was established in 1972 to protect the best remaining examples of Wisconsin's native vegetation as well as habitat for endangered and threatened plants and animals. Natural areas will help protect the natural diversity of the landscape and preserve for future generations a living history of the past. Natural areas are also used for study by elementary to college age school groups and researchers as well as the general public. Other recreational activities such as hiking, cross-country skiing, fishing, and hunting are also popular.

Apple River Canyon features a deep narrow gorge flanked by high cliffs along the Apple River about two miles upstream from its confluence with the St. Croix River. The canyon lies a few miles south of the limits of Glacial Lake Grantsburg, and, presumably, the gorge was formed during the period of drainage of the lake. The vegetation is of paramount interest due to the nearly east-west orientation of a segment of the gorge, creating north and south walls with contrasting sunlight, moisture, and temperature conditions. On the upland to the north is an oak forest; on the south-facing upper slope a strip of prairie grasses; on the south-facing cliffs a few lichens and mosses; on the lowest talus slope a floodplain forest; on north-facing talus a northern dry-mesic forest; on northern cliffs, cryptogams; and on the upper slope a narrow prairie.

The Department recommends purchase of the Berggren property to protect the natural values of the site, to allow for natural area management, to provide opportunities for public education and recreation, and to protect the site from development incompatible with the goals of the Statewide Natural Area program.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the purchase of 10 acres of land for \$190,000 for the Statewide Natural Area.

**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:**

*Richard E. Steffes*  
Real Estate Director, Richard E. Steffes - LF/6

5-12-08  
Date

*Laurie Osterndorf*  
Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

5/15/08  
Date

*Matthew J. Frank*  
Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

6/9/08  
Date

- cc: S. Miller - LF/6                      L. Ross - AD/8  
       R. Steffes - LF/6                    S. Holtz, ER/6  
       S. Humrickhouse - WCR

DATE: May 12, 2008  
TO: Governor Doyle  
FROM: Matthew J. Frank  
SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Dorothy Berggren Tract, File # NA-920,  
Option Expires July 5, 2008

FILE REF: NA-920

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Statewide Natural Area Program  
Apple River Canyon  
St. Croix County

Grantor:

Dorothy Berggren  
16165 Creekwood Circle  
Prior Lake, MN 55372

Acres: 10.0Price: \$190,000Appraised Value: \$190,000 and \$189,000Interest: Purchase in fee.Improvements: None

Location: The tract is located in the western part of St. Croix County just over a mile east of the Minnesota border. The tract is two miles northwest of the Village of Somerset.

Land Description: The Apple River meanders through the south end of the parcel running from east to west. The river is located in a deep gorge estimated to be about 250 feet deep and about 100 to 150 feet wide.

Water: There is 650 feet of frontage on the west bank of the Apple River.

<u>Covertime Breakdown:</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
	Wooded Upland	10

Zoning: Agriculture/ResidentialPresent Use: RecreationalProposed Use: Resource protection and public recreationTenure: 28 yearsProperty Taxes: \$2,002Option Date: March 7, 2008

Stewardship Land Access: The property will be open to hunting, fishing, trapping and other nature-based outdoor recreation.

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The 10-acre Dorothy Berggren property is proposed for purchase for the Statewide Natural Area program, specifically the Apple River Canyon Natural Area. The subject is located in the western part of St. Croix County a mile east of the Minnesota border with the Village of Somerset only two miles southeast of the

subject. The parcel includes 650 feet of frontage along the west bank of the Apple River and adjoins state-owned lands to the west and north. Most of the 10 acres is mature oak hardwoods with cliff side vegetation also present on the north riparian zone of the Apple River. Ownership will protect the natural values of the site for future generations, allow natural area management, prevent incompatible development within the project boundary, and provide opportunities for public recreation and natural area research and education

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3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$2,000,000	\$1,810,000

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE STATEWIDE NATURAL AREA:

Established: 1972  
Acres Purchased to Date: 35,780  
Acquisition Goal: 41,000 Acres  
Percent Complete: 87%  
Cost to Date: \$19,500,411

5a. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Thomas Olson (Private Appraiser)  
Valuation Date: November 28, 2007  
Appraised Value: \$190,000  
Highest and Best Use: Single Residential Site

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 10 acres @ \$25,934 per acre: \$190,000
- b. market data approach used, three comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$188,300 to \$211,100 per 10 acres

Appraisal Review: Ronald Olson – January 31, 2008

5b. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Ronald Rasmussen (Private Appraiser)

Valuation Date: January 17, 2008

Appraised Value: \$189,000

Highest and Best Use: Site/Woods

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 10 acres @ \$18,900 per acre: \$189,000
- b. market data approach used, six comparable sales cited

Comments: The Olson report was selected for negotiation purposes.

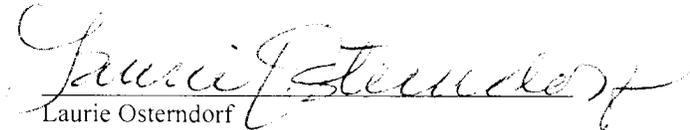
RECOMMENDED:

  
 Richard E. Steffes

5-12-2008  
 Date

  
 Bureau of Legal Services

5/13/08  
 Date

  
 Laurie Osterndorf

5/15/08  
 Date

RES:dv

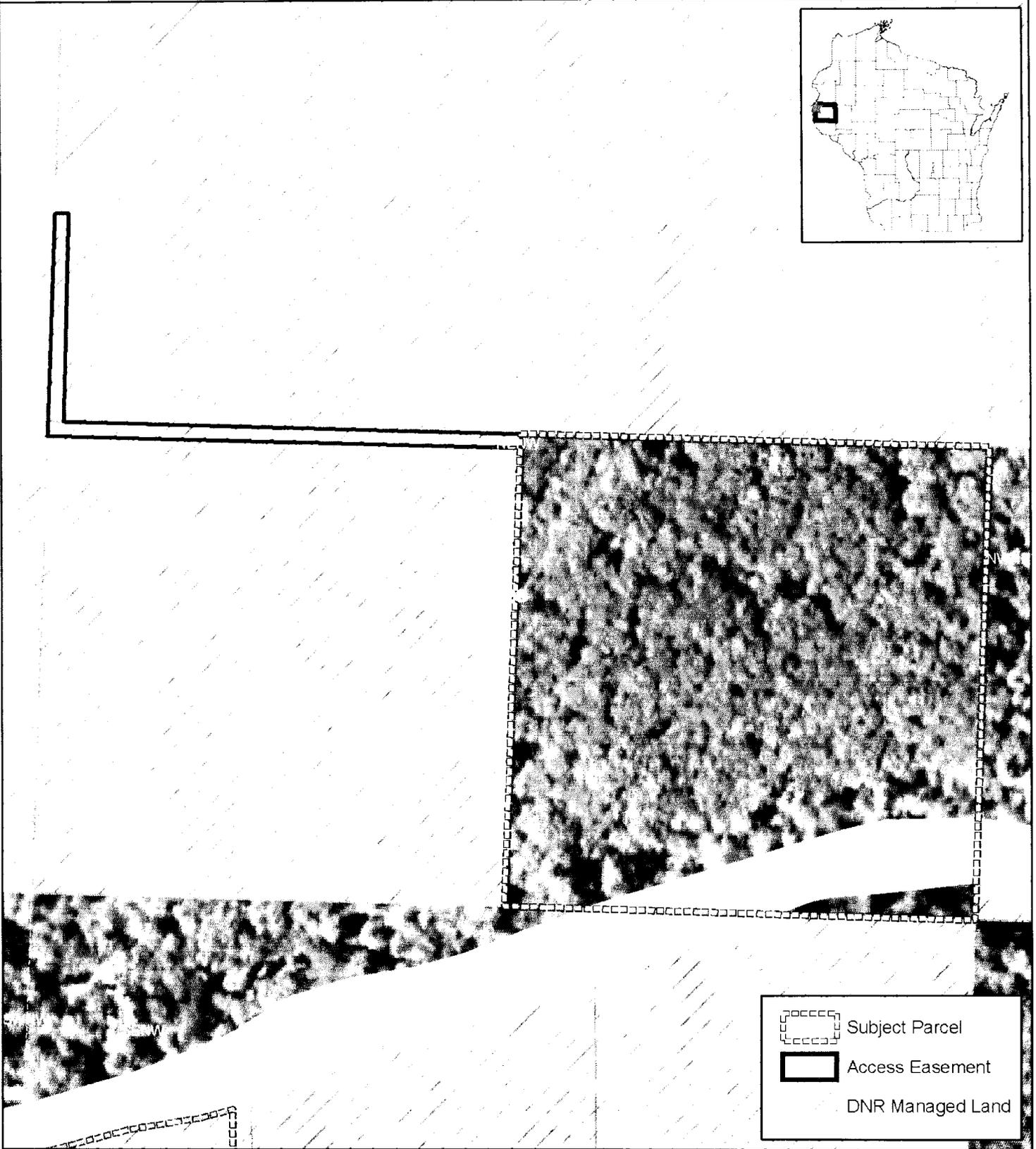
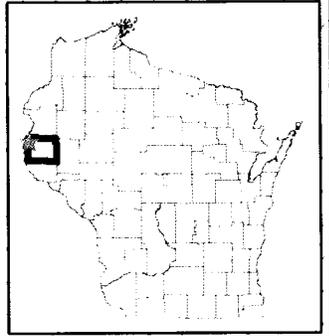


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# Berggren Property

T 31N R 19W Section 28, Town of Somerset, St. Croix County



 Subject Parcel

 Access Easement

 DNR Managed Land



Created by Bureau of Facilities and Lands  
Real Estate Section  
March 31, 2008



