

SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION -QUINCY BLUFF AND WETLANDS NATURAL AREA - ADAMS COUNTY

FOR: JUNE 2010 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Department has partnered with The Conservation Fund (TCF) to acquire 870.4 acres of land for the Quincy Bluff State Natural Area in Adams County for \$2,622,082.65. This is one of five critical parcels of land for important state conservation projects. The lands will be held by TCF and then purchased by the Department, assuming approvals. The item is being submitted due to the significant size of the transaction.

The parcel is within the project boundary and adjacent to land owned by the Department and The Nature Conservancy, having a common boundary of 3.5 miles. About 490 acres are forested uplands, with closed canopy oak/jack pine and 20 acres of old-field that can be restored to savanna/barrens habitat. The remaining land is mostly open water and sedge meadow. Much of the open water habitat would be restored to sedge meadow following removal of a berm when land containing the berm is acquired. Acquisition of the 870 acres will allow for savanna/barrens management that will provide ideal lupine and Karner habitat. Ownership of the tract will protect the natural values for future generations, consolidate state ownership, allow natural area management, and provide opportunities for public recreation and natural area history research and education.

Quincy Bluff and Wetlands Natural Area, currently more than 5,000 acres, was established in 1992 to protect a dynamic Central Sands ecosystem composed of an interconnected group of natural communities and their component species. The project contains a vast wetland complex sandwiched between sandstone ridges and buttes and bordered on the north and west by extensive barrens and managed forest. Covering the uplands are oak and pine barrens, a xeric forest of mostly Hill's oaks and pines, and small patches of sand prairie. In the wetlands, are both northern and southern sedge meadow, northern wet forest, and shrub-carr. Unique components of the ecosystem include six rare plant species, 17 priority bird species, and five rare invertebrates. In addition to protection of natural communities and species, the project also provides opportunities for research and education and for public recreation ranging from nature observation to hunting.

The Department was awarded \$1,305,000 from the Fish and Wildlife Service to assist with acquisition of the Quincy Bluff parcel as part of the Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan. This project has excellent potential Karner habitat since thousands of acres of savanna/barrens can be restored. Lupines are found in low numbers in the area and are increasing with barrens restoration. Over time, this may be one of the larger areas of Karner habitat in central Wisconsin.

Department ownership will consolidate state ownership, prevent incompatible development, allow for natural area management, protect the natural features of the site, and provide opportunities for research, education, and public recreation.

Note: The Department is facilitating this transaction by using an intermediary buyer, The Conservation Fund (TCF), to assist with acquisition and timing of the purchase. This price is inclusive of TCF's closing costs, administrative and holding fees and assumes the Department can close by August 31, 2010.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of 870.4 acres of land for \$2,622,082.65 for Quincy Bluff State 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 |

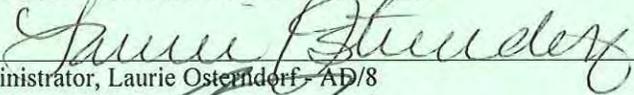
APPROVED:



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

6-2-10

Date



Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

6/2/10

Date



Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

6-8-10

Date

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| cc: S. Miller - LF/6 | K. Warnke - ER/6 |
| R. Steffes - LF/6 | S. Humrickhouse - WCR/Eau Claire |
| L. Ross - AD/8 | |

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 1, 2010 FILE REF: NA 20028

TO: Governor Doyle

FROM: Matthew J. Frank 

SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisitions, The Conservation Fund (TCF) Tract,
Approval is Requested by August 15, 2010

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Quincy Bluff Natural Area
Adams County

Grantor:

The Conservation Fund
Attorney Jodi O'Day
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 204
Annapolis, MD 21403
and
The Conservation Fund
Attorney Lily Engle
1655 North Fort Meyer Drive, Suite 1300
Arlington, VA 22209-3199

Acres: 870.4Price: \$2,622,082.65Appraised Value: See appraisal section below.Interest: Fee Title PurchaseLocation: The property is located in central Adams County in the Town of Quincy, approximately five miles south of Adams-Friendship.Land Description: The subject is level to rolling. The land consists of two separate parcels located on the east side of two large, man-made impoundments.Improvements: None

<u>Covertime Breakdown:</u>	<u>Type:</u>	<u>Acreage:</u>
	Upland Woodland	490.0
	Water	252.0
	Wetland	<u>128.4</u>
	TOTAL:	870.4

Zoning: Agriculture, Wetland/ShorelandPresent Use: Recreation and InvestmentProposed Use: Natural Area Protection and Public RecreationTenure: 19 years(Quincy Bluff Fisheries); TCF acquired the land on February 10, 2010 for \$2,523,522.Property Taxes: \$25,715Purchase Agreement Date: July 7, 2009Stewardship 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.

JUSTIFICATION:

The Department obtained a contract to purchase 870.4 acres from The Conservation Fund for the Quincy Bluff and Wetlands Natural Area in Adams County. The parcel is within the project boundary and adjacent to land owned by the Department and The Nature Conservancy, having a common boundary of 3.5 miles. About 490 acres are forested uplands, with closed canopy oak/jack pine and 20 acres of old-field that can be restored to savanna/barrens habitat. The remaining land is mostly open water and sedge meadow. Much of the open water habitat would be restored to sedge meadow following removal of a berm when land containing the berm is acquired. Acquisition of the 870 acres will allow for savanna/barrens management that will provide ideal lupine and Karner habitat. Ownership of the tract will protect the natural values for future generations, consolidate state ownership, allow natural area management, and provide opportunities for public recreation and natural area history research and education.

Quincy Bluff and Wetlands Natural Area, currently more than 5,000 acres, was established in 1992 to protect a dynamic Central Sands ecosystem composed of an interconnected group of natural communities and their component species. The project contains a vast wetland complex sandwiched between sandstone ridges and buttes and bordered on the north and west by extensive barrens and managed forest. Covering the uplands are oak and pine barrens, a xeric forest of mostly Hill's oaks and pines, and small patches of sand prairie. In the wetlands, are both northern and southern sedge meadow, northern wet forest, and shrub-carr. Unique components of the ecosystem include six rare plant species, 17 priority bird species, and five rare invertebrates. In addition to protection of natural communities and species, the project also provides opportunities for research and education and for public recreation ranging from nature observation to hunting.

Quincy Bluff is one of Wisconsin's 86 Important Bird Areas. The 870 acres is in two separate parcels ½-mile apart. State and The Nature Conservancy land border about half of the perimeter.

The Department was awarded \$1,305,000 from the Fish and Wildlife Service to assist with acquisition of the Quincy Bluff parcel as part of the Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan. This project has excellent potential Karner habitat since thousands of acres of savanna/barrens can be restored. Lupines are found in low numbers in the area and are increasing with barrens restoration. Over time, this may be one of the larger areas of Karner habitat in central Wisconsin.

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3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond (FY11) funds and USFWS Karner Blue Butterfly grant funds are anticipated:

	Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
Stewardship	\$50,000,000	\$26,845,046
Cost-Share	\$ 1,305,000	\$0

4c. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE QUINCY BLUFF AND WETLANDS NATURAL AREA:

Established: 1992
Acres Purchased to Date: 5,055.37
Acquisition Goal: 10,500.0 Acres
Percent Complete: 48.15%
Cost to Date: \$1,973,690.00

5a. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Phil Lepinski
Valuation Date: September 23, 2008
Appraised Value: \$2,437,000
Highest and Best Use: Residential and Recreation/Forestry

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 870.4 acres @ \$2,800 per acre: \$2,437,000.00
- b. market data approach used, five comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$1,633 to \$3,114 per acre

Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter – December 3, 2008
Federal Appraisal Review: Wendy Walker – March 31, 2010

5b. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Rodney Bush
Valuation Date: September, 23, 2008
Appraised Value: \$2,610,500
Highest and Best Use: Recreation, timber production, and residential

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 870.4 acres @ \$3,000 per acre: \$2,610,500
- b. market data approach used, four comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$2794 to \$3095 per acre

Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter – December 17, 2008
Federal Appraisal Review: Wendy Walker – March 31, 2010

RECOMMENDED:

Richard E. Steffes 

6-2-10
Date

Bureau of Legal Services 

6-2-10
Date

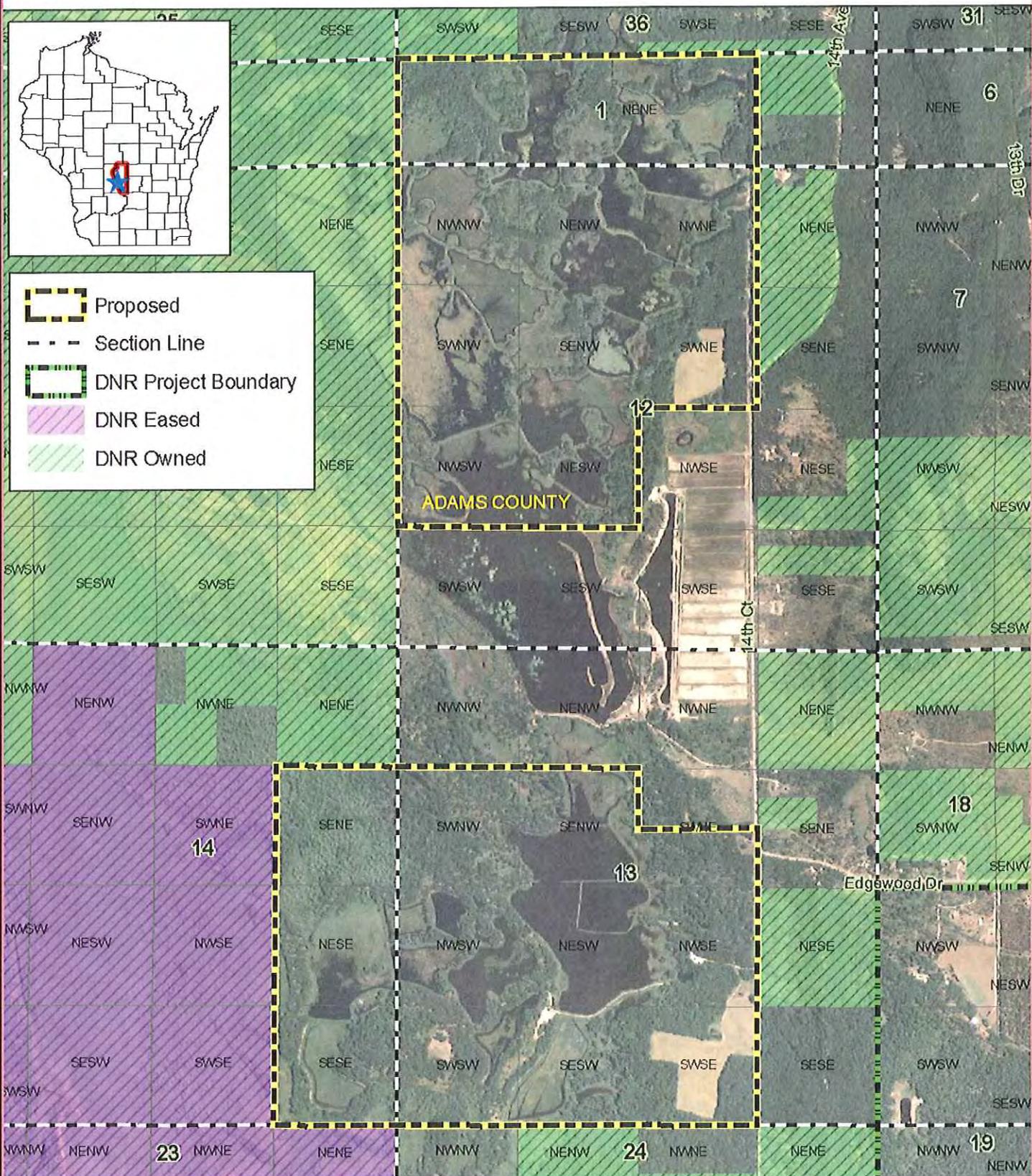
Laurie Osterndorf 

6/2/10
Date

RES:ch/dv

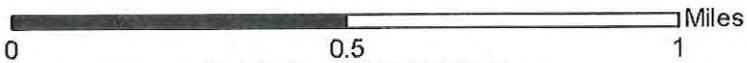
The Conservation Fund

T16N R4-5E Sec. 1 & 12, 13, Adams County, WI



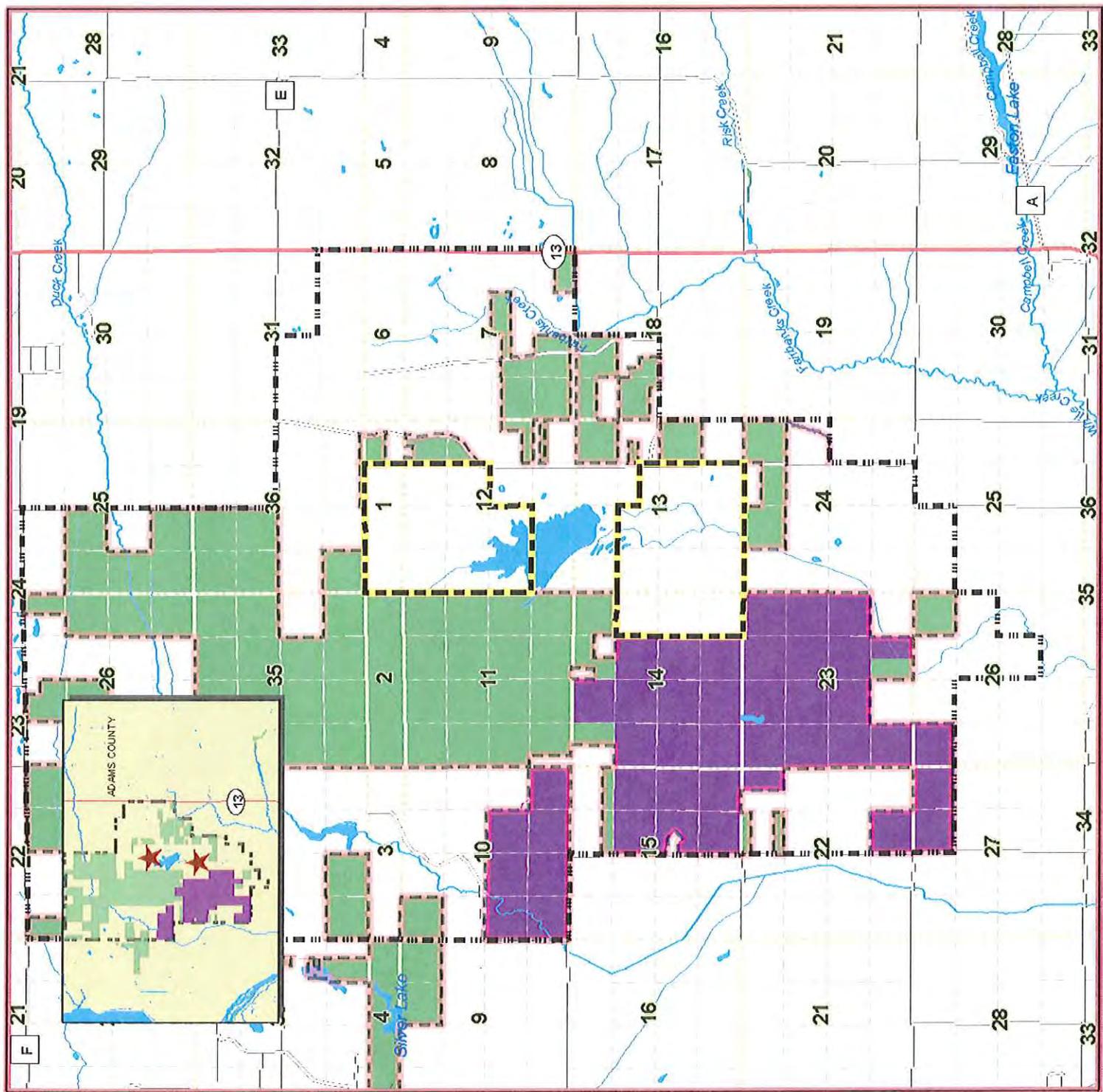
 Proposed
 Section Line
 DNR Project Boundary
 DNR Eased
 DNR Owned

PROPOSED
 NA 20028
 Quincy Bluff And
 Wetlands Natural Area



Created by Bureau of Facilities and Lands
 Real Estate Section
 June 30, 2009





The Conservation Fund

T16N R4-5E Sec. 1 & 12, 13
Adams County, WI



PROPOSED

NA 20028

PLSS Section

Proposed

Project Boundary

State Natural Area

WDNR Owned

WDNR Easement



The DNR Managed Lands represent the boundaries of lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin DNR does not represent ownership, easement or lease rights. This data set is a spatial representation of the State Land Records System maintained by the DNR, Bureau of Facilities and Lands (BFL), and may include errors and/or omissions. The data set is not intended to be used as a legal representation of legal ownership boundaries.

This data set does not delineate between lands that are open or closed to the public. The data set may not be open to the general public, or may have specific limitations or restrictions on public use. This data set is not intended to be used as a land management tool; it is a listing of all DNR real estate transactions that have occurred on these lands over time.

For information about the actual management, including public use and public access of the lands, contact the nearest DNR Regional Office. Contact information for DNR Regional Offices and Service Centers is provided on the following internet site:
<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/bureaus/servicecenters/location.htm>

Updates to this data set are ongoing, and will be incorporated into future versions when available.

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Bureau of Facilities and Lands
JUNE 30, 2009