

**SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION – GOVERNOR KNOWLES STATE FOREST – POLK COUNTY**

**FOR: OCTOBER 2011 BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Richard Steffes

**SUMMARY:** The Department has obtained an option to purchase 67.98 acres from James Menke for \$160,000 for the Governor Knowles State Forest in Polk County. This is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000.

The parcel is located in northwest Polk County approximately 18 miles southwest of Grantsburg in the Town of Sterling. It is surrounded by state owned lands on all sides, with a small chunk of private land adjoining the southwest corner of the subject. This property will provide a connective link with abutting Governor Knowles State Forest land that will improve efficiencies for recreation and forest management by eliminating the need to complete property line surveys, cutting agreements and trail use agreements.

Governor Knowles State Forest, located in west-central Wisconsin, was established in 1970 to protect and manage land along the St. Croix River for forestry, water quality, and other natural resource goals, as well as to provide a variety of recreational opportunities. The property is used by the public for hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling, trapping, cross-country skiing, hiking, and other outdoor recreation.

The parcel is mostly wooded with immature red pine, small sized oak, jack pine and aspen. The western portion of the property is open field and slopes toward the Trade River with numerous springs flowing out of the escarpment. A portion of the Trade River Equestrian Trail crosses the property for over a half mile. The Department currently holds a lease with Mr. Menke for this 33 foot wide horse trail, which is set to expire in September 2011. This trail is a critical segment of the DNR equestrian trail system and provides a connective loop to the Trade River Day Use Area to the north. If the DNR does not acquire the subject and the land is sold, there is no permanent agreement in place to guarantee the trail would remain. Relocation of the trail would require approximately 2 miles of re-route, across roads and other private lands to reach township property.

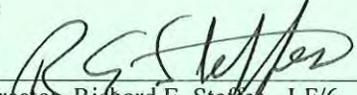
This acquisition will help for consolidate state ownership and contiguous land connections that render the forest more viable for public recreational opportunities and resource management. This purchase would ensure that a critical section of a popular equestrian trail would remain well into the future.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the purchase of 67.98 acres for \$160,000 for the Governor Knowles State Forest.

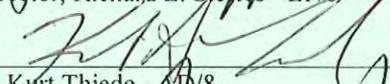
**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 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 |

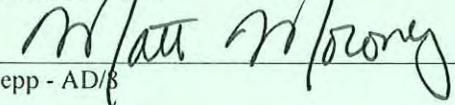
**APPROVED:**

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

9-19-11  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator, Kurt Thiede - AD/8

9-22-11  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Cathy Stepp - AD/8

10/5/11  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

- cc: S. Miller – LF/6
- R. Steffes – LF/6
- L. Ross – AD/8
- R. Mather – FR/4
- J. Gozdzialski – NOR/Spooner

**CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM**

DATE: September 19, 2011  
 TO: Scott Walker  
 FROM: Cathy Stepp  
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, James Menke Tract, File # NF 30062 ,  
 Option Expires 12/12/2011

FILE REF: NF 30062

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Governor Knowles State Forest  
 Polk County

Grantor:

James Menke  
 531 Sandalwood Ln  
 San Antonio, TX 78216

Acres: 67.98  
Price: \$160,000  
Appraised Value: \$160,000  
Interest: Fee Title Purchase  
Improvements: None

Location: The property is located in Polk County, 18 miles southwest of Grantsburg.

Land Description: The subject land is fairly level.

Covertypes Breakdown:

	Type	Acreage
Wetland		10
Pine Plantation		30
Lowland Woodland		27.98

Total: 67.98

Zoning: None  
Present Use: Recreational/Investment  
Proposed Use: Recreational  
Tenure: 19 years  
Property Taxes: \$769.40  
Option Date: September 15, 2011

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:

The Department has obtained an option to purchase 67.98 acres of land from James Menke for \$160,000 for the Governor Knowles State Forest in Polk County. This mostly wooded parcel is proposed for purchase to provide a connective link with abutting Governor Knowles State Forest land that will improve efficiencies for recreation and forest management by eliminating the need to complete property line surveys, cutting agreements and trail use agreements.



Governor Knowles State Forest, located in west-central Wisconsin, was established in 1970 to protect and manage land along the St. Croix River for forestry, water quality, and other natural resource goals, as well as to provide a variety of recreational opportunities. The property is used by the public for hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling, trapping, cross-country skiing, hiking, and other outdoor recreation.

The subject property exists entirely within the project boundary of the forest and is located in northwest Polk County about 18 miles southwest of Grantsburg in the Town of Sterling. The parcel is surrounded by state owned lands on all sides, with a small chunk of private land adjoining the southwest corner of the subject. The tract is mostly wooded with cover types including immature red pine, small sized oak, jack pine and aspen. The western portion of the property is open field with the extreme western edge sloping toward the Trade River with numerous springs flowing out of the escarpment. While no water amenities exist on the parcel, it lies approximately 125 feet east of the Trade River. This land offers an extra measure of protection to this large tributary of the St. Croix River.

A portion of the Trade River Equestrian Trail crosses the subject parcel for slightly over a half mile. The Department currently holds a lease with Mr. Menke for this 33 foot wide horse trail; this lease is set to expire this September 2011. This is a critical segment of the DNR equestrian trail system and provides a connective loop to the Trade River Day Use Area to the north. If the Department does not acquire the subject and the land is sold, there is no permanent agreement in place to guarantee the trail remain. Relocation of the subject portion of trail would require approximately 2 miles of re-route, across roads and other private lands to reach township property where the trail could possibly be re-established, if the town were agreeable.

The Department recommends this property acquisition to allow for consolidation of state ownership and maintenance of contiguous land connections that render the forest more viable for public recreational opportunities and resource management. This purchase would ensure that a critical section of a popular equestrian trail would remain well into the future.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$3,090,000	\$2,920,400

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE Governor Knowles State Forest:

Established: 1970  
Acres Purchased to Date: 20,433.45  
Acquisition Goal: 30,175.00  
Percent Complete: 67.72 %  
Cost to Date: \$4,427,761.30

5. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Ron Olson  
Valuation Date: January 25, 2011  
Appraised Value: \$160,000  
Highest and Best Use: Recreational

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 67.98 acres @ \$2,353.63 per acre: \$160,000
- b. market data approach used, 4 comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$2,012 - \$2,375 per acre

Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter, 3/22/2011

RECOMMENDED:

Richard E. Steffes  
Richard E. Steffes, Real Estate Director

9-19-11  
Date

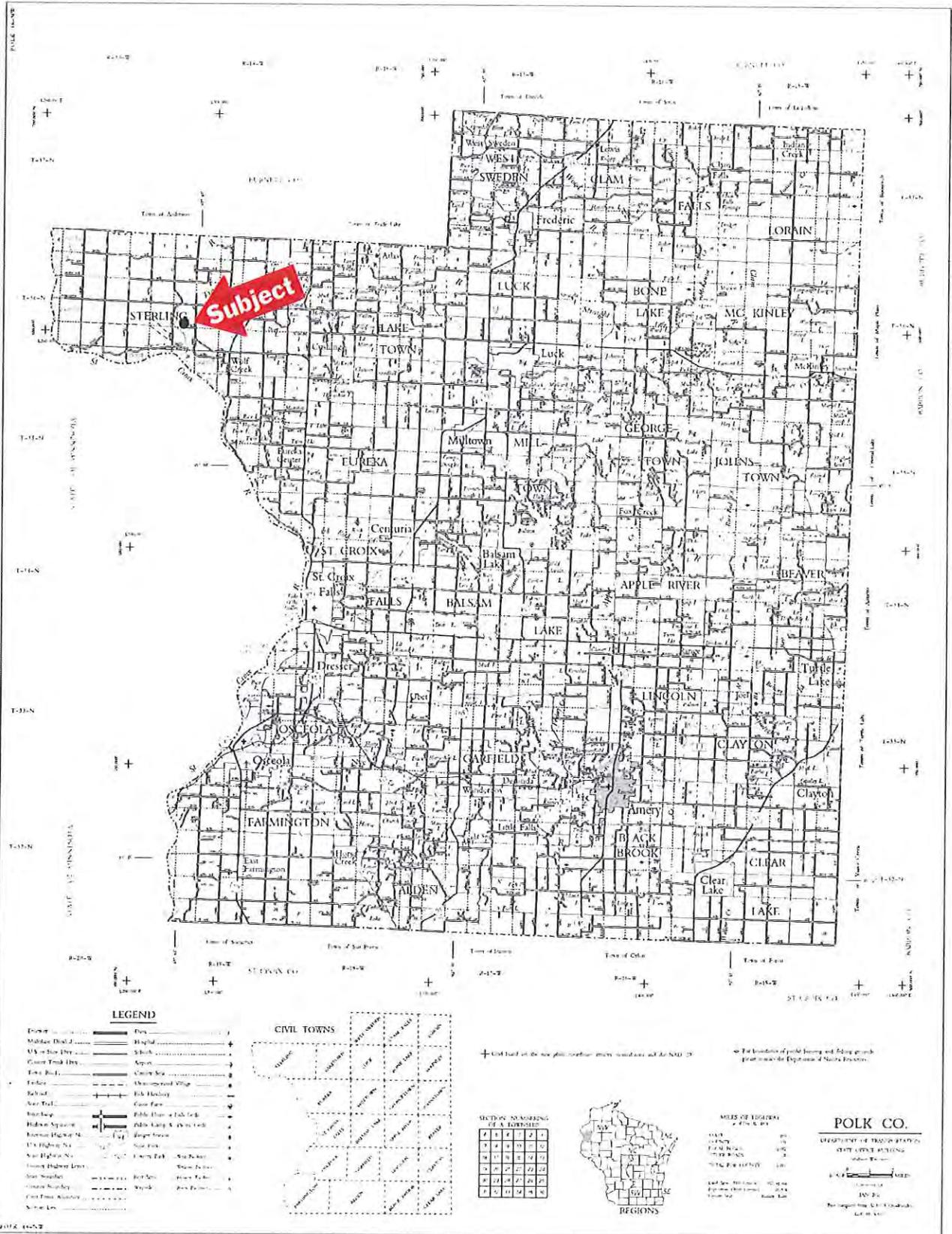
Kris Hess  
Kris Hess, Bureau of Legal Services

9/20/11  
Date

Kurt Thiede  
Kurt Thiede, Land Division Administrator

9/22/11  
Date

RES:sjs



**James Menke Fee**  
Governor Knowles  
State Forest  
NF 30062

T36N R19W Sec 19  
Town of Sterling,  
Polk County  
67.98 acres

 Subject Parcel

 WDNR Owned

 WDNR Owned

 WDNR Easement

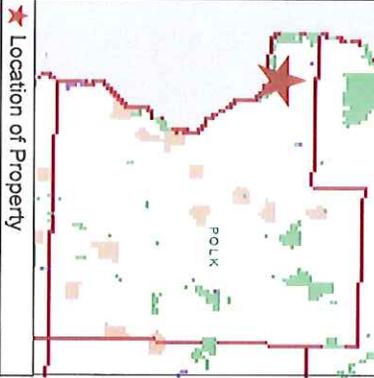
 DNR Project Boundary

 QQ Section Boundary

 Barrens/Sunrise  
Horse Trail

  
0 600  
Feet

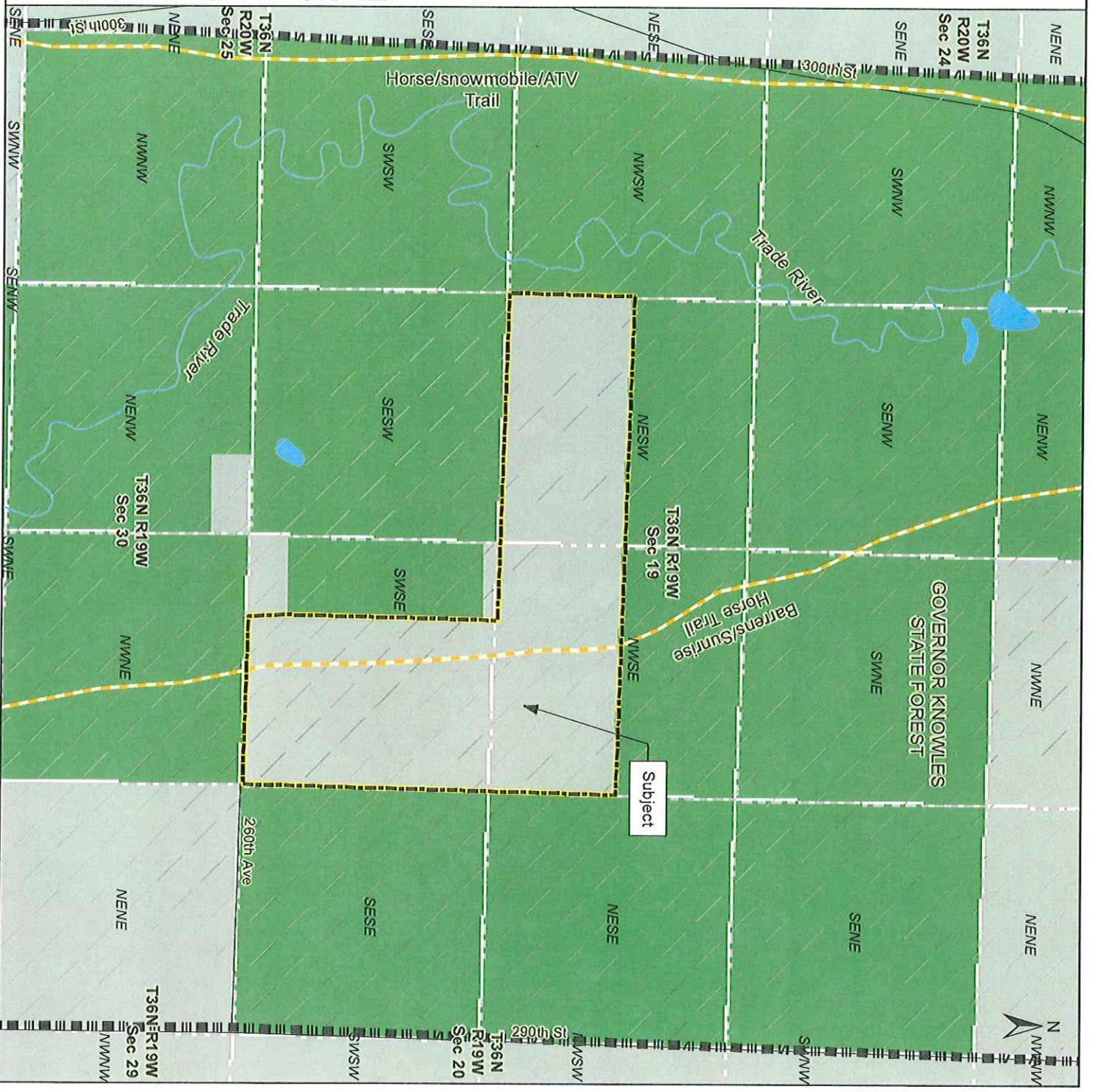
*Polk County View*



★ Location of Property

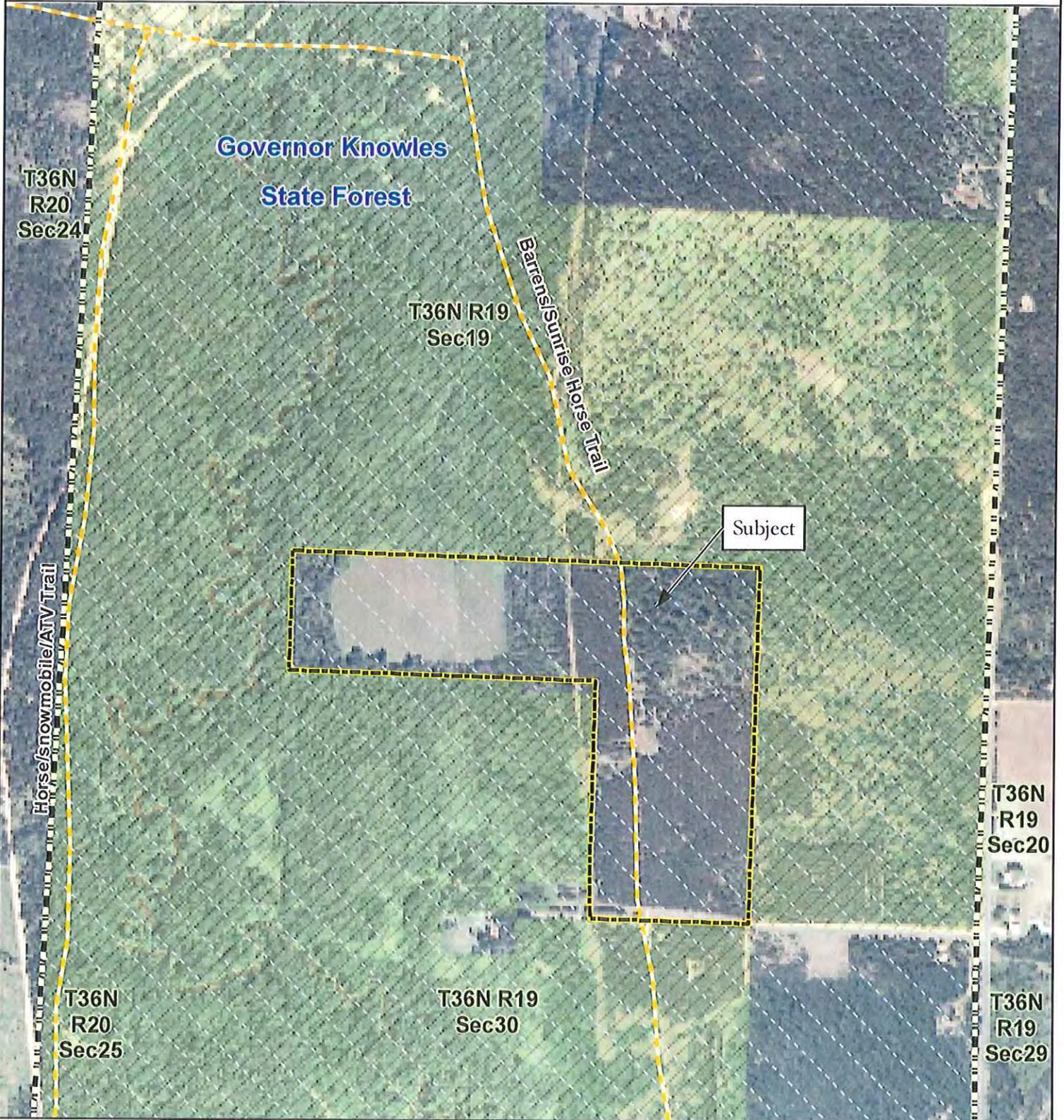


WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
Bureau of Facilities of Lands  
Map Created: Sep 16, 2011 kmh



# James Menke Fee

T36N R19W Sec 19, Town of Sterling, Polk County



**Governor Knowles  
State Forest**

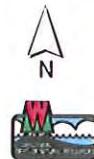
 Subject Parcel

 DNR Owned

 DNR Project  
Boundary

 State Recreation Trail

  
0 250 500 750 Feet



Sep 16, 2011 kmh  
Real Estate Section  
Bureau of Facilities and Lands