

SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION, CENTRAL WISCONSIN GRASSLANDS CONSERVATION AREA - PORTAGE COUNTY

FOR: DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Department has obtained an option to purchase 78.96 acres of land from the Portage County Solid Waste Department for \$150,000 for the Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area in Portage County. The item is being submitted because the landowner is conveying for \$15,800 less than the appraised value of \$165,800.

The Department proposed purchase of this parcel to the Natural Resource Board in September of 2005. At the time, the land was valued at \$163,800 and the Board deferred the matter, directing the department to re-negotiate a lower price. Since that time, the Portage County Solid Waste Department became a for-profit entity. The price is now at the lower cost of \$150,000.

The tract is located in the Township of Carson in northwest Portage County, thirteen miles west of Stevens Point. The subject is all open grassland that has been heavily grazed in the past. This site was purchased by the Portage County Solid Waste Department in 2000 to use as a clay borrow site to excavate landfill-capping materials. The county completed a \$50,000 engineering survey, a clay study and secured regulatory permits to develop the site. The county has removed some clay off the site. However, their need for further clay is limited. Department ownership of this land will provide opportunities for public recreation, allow for wildlife management, and protect the site from development incompatible with the goals of the project.

The property's location is ideal for wildlife management, as approximately 200 acres adjacent to the east are owned by the Department. To the north, the Department of Transportation currently owns approximately 120 adjacent acres that may be transferred to the Department in the near future. To the west, there are numerous acres entered into the Wetland Reserve Program. In addition to providing habitat for prairie chicken and various songbirds, this property would provide additional hunting and other recreational opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of 78.96 acres of land for \$150,000 for the Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area.

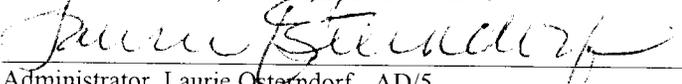
LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

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

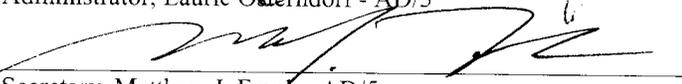
APPROVED:



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



Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/5



Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/5

10-18-07

Date

10/19/07

Date

11/7/07

Date

- cc: S. Miller - LF/6
R. Steffes - LF/6
L. Ross - AD/5
T. Hauge - WM/6
S. Humrickhouse - WCR

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 18, 2007

FILE REF: W-1636

TO: Governor Doyle

FROM: Matthew J. Frank

SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Portage County Tract, File # W-1636, Option Expires December 16, 2007

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area
Portage County

Grantor:

Portage County Solid Waste Department
c/o Meleesa Johnson, Administrator
Solid Waste Department
600 Moore Road
Plover, WI 54467

Acres: 78.96

Price: \$150,000

Appraised Value: \$165,800

Interest: Purchase in fee.

Improvements: Old silo foundation (to be removed).

Location: The tract is located in the Township of Carson in northwest Portage County, thirteen miles west of Stevens Point, the county seat.

Land Description: The subject area is fairly level to gently sloping to the southeast.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
	Grasslands	76.96
	Building Site	<u>2.0</u>
	TOTAL	78.96

Zoning: Agricultural Transition, minimum lot size of ten acres

Present Use: Clay borrow site/Recreational

Proposed Use: Wildlife Protection and Public Recreation

Tenure: 7 Years

Property Taxes: tax exempt

Option Date: September 17, 2007

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Solid Waste Department of Portage County, a for-profit entity, has agreed to sell approximately 78.96 acres of their property to the state as an addition to the Central WI Grasslands Conservation Area (CWGCA) in Portage County. The tract is located in the Township of Carson in northwest Portage County, thirteen miles west of Stevens Point. The Department proposed purchase of this parcel to the Natural Resource Board, in September of 2005. At that time, the land was valued at \$163,800 and the Board

deferred the matter directing the Department to negotiate a lower price. Since that time, the Portage County Solid Waste Department became a for-profit entity. The valuation is now at a lower cost of \$150,000.

The subject is all open grassland that has been heavily grazed in the past. This site was purchased by the Portage County Solid Waste Department in 2000 to use as a clay borrow site to excavate landfill-capping materials. The county completed a \$50,000 engineering survey, a clay study and secured regulatory permits to develop the site. The county has removed some clay off the site. However, their need for further clay is limited. Department ownership of this land will provide opportunities for public recreation, allow for wildlife management, and protect the site from development incompatible with the goals of the project.

The Central Wisconsin Grassland Conservation Area covers portions of six counties. It surrounds several smaller wildlife management projects, the Paul Olson Wildlife Area being one of them, as well as two fishery management project areas. The project area boundary was developed by determining the core range for historic and current prairie chicken populations, and the management goals are primarily for grasslands species such as the prairie chicken and various songbirds.

The Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area approved by the Natural Resources Board in October of 2004 seeks to protect up to 15,000 acres over the next ten years to meet the habitat needs of many rare and declining grassland species, most notably the Greater Prairie Chicken. The CWGCA represents one of the last opportunities in the state to manage grasslands at a landscape scale. Another goal of the project is to provide low impact outdoor recreation opportunities compatible with grassland management.

Due to changes within the County, it no longer needs this site for clay borrowing. Development of adequate grassland habitat on this property will provide added security for the chicken population in this area. According to a 2004 survey, there are three to four active prairie chicken booming grounds (breeding display sites) within one mile of the subject property. The property's location is ideal for wildlife management as approximately 200 acres adjacent to the east are owned by the Department. To the north, the Department of Transportation currently owns approximately 120 adjacent acres that may be transferred to the Department in the near future. To the west, there are numerous acres entered into the Wetland Reserve Program. In addition to providing habitat for prairie chicken and various songbirds, this property would provide additional hunting and other recreational opportunities.

The Department recommends purchase of the Portage County Solid Waste Department property for the Paul Olson Wildlife Area and surrounding Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation area. This purchase will allow for wildlife management, create public hunting and other recreational activities, protect grassland species' habitat, and protect the natural values of the property from the impacts of development incompatible with the goals of the project.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$7,124,000	\$169,638

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE CENTRAL WISCONSIN GRASSLAND CONSERVATION AREA:

Established: 2005
Acres Purchased to Date: 759.62
Acquisition Goal: 15,000 Acres
Percent Complete: 5.1%
Cost to Date: \$1,118,800

5. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Rodney Bush (Private Appraiser)

Valuation Date: July 5, 2007

Appraised Value: \$165,800

Highest and Best Use: Clay Borrow Site, Agriculture and Recreation

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 78.96 acres @ \$2,100 per acre: \$165,800 (Rounded)
- b. market data approach used, four comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$2,063 to \$3,465 per acre

Appraisal Review: Phil Lepinski — July 26, 2007

RECOMMENDED:



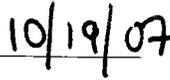
 Richard E. Steffes



 Date



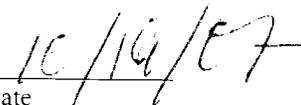
 Bureau of Legal Services



 Date



 Laurie Osterndorf



 Date

RES:dv

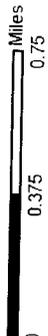
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Portage County Property

Paul Olson Wildlife Area

-  Subject Property
-  WDNR Owned
-  WNDR Eased
-  WDNR Leased
-  Ice Age Trail
-  Project Boundary
-  Open Water



The DNR Managed Lands represent the boundaries of lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin Open Lands are those lands through which the easement or lease rights. This data set is a spatial representation of the Oracle Land Records System, maintained by the DNR, Bureau of Facilities and Lands (BFL), and may include minor errors and/or omissions. This data should not be interpreted as a legal representation of legal land boundaries.

This data set does not differentiate between lands that are open or closed to the public for general public access. Some lands may have specific limits or restrictions on public use. This data set is not intended for use as a management tool. It is a listing of all DNR real estate transactions that are 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 Contact Centers is provided on the following internet's list:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/openlands/land/communication.htm>

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

**STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES**



Bureau of Facilities and Lands

October 11, 2007

CENTRAL WISCONSIN GRASSLAND CONSERVATION AREA

PAUL OLSON WILDLIFE AREA

Portage County Property

Bluebird Rd

Brandl Rd

G

Ortola Rd

M

5th Ave N

Freds Ln

3rd Ave S

Cats Ln

3rd Ave

2nd Ave

34

