

SUBJECT: EASEMENT DONATON – STATEWIDE NATURAL AREAS – MARQUETTE COUNTY

FOR: DECEMBER 2009 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Department proposes to accept a 30-acre conservation easement and natural area dedication from Charles and Barbara Church for the Observatory Hill State Natural Area as part of the Statewide Natural Areas Program in Marquette County. The item is being submitted because it is a donation.

The Statewide Natural Areas 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 used for study by elementary to college-age school groups and researchers.

The highest point in Marquette County is Observatory Hill, an isolated outcropping of rhyolite rising 300 feet above the surrounding landscape. The fine-grained rhyolite, an igneous rock embedded with feldspar crystals, is highly resistant to erosion and has been dated to 1.76 billion years ago. The exposed rock faces at the summit have grooves and striations created by the passage of the glacial ice sheet 12,000 years ago. Recently, scientists have discovered the existence of petroglyphs on the hill's rock outcroppings, which may be part of a larger prehistoric petroform found in Marquette County. The slopes are covered with a southern dry forest community dominated by red and white oak, basswood and shagbark hickory and much of the area is now being restored to oak savanna, an imperiled vegetation community in Wisconsin. The hill has long been known by naturalists and was a favorite childhood haunt of John Muir who lived nearby. Observatory Hill is owned by the Department and was designated a State Natural Area in 1989.

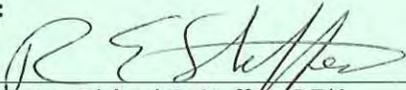
Acceptance of the donation of the 30-acre conservation easement and articles of dedication from Charles and Barbara Church will protect the natural values of this site, and provide access for scientific and educational study.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board accept the donation of the 30-acre conservation easement and articles of dedication for the Statewide Natural Areas program, that a certificate of appreciation be sent to the donors, and that an expression of appreciation be made part of the official records of the Natural Resources Board.

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 |

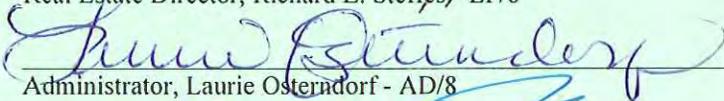
APPROVED:



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

11-6-09

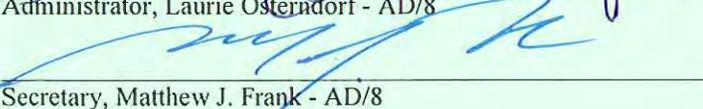
Date



Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

11/10/09

Date



Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

11/9/09

Date

- cc: S. Miller – LF/6
R. Steffes – LF/6
L. Ross – AD/8
S. Holtz – ER/6
R. Kazmierczak – NER/Green Bay

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 6, 2009 FILE REF: D 5005
 TO: Natural Resources Board
 FROM: Matthew J. Frank
 SUBJECT: Proposed Gift of an Easement and Articles of Dedication from the Church Tract, File # D 5005

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Statewide Natural Areas Program
 Observatory Hill State Natural Area
 Marquette County

Grantor:

Charles and Barbara Church
 N2070 14th Court
 Montello, WI 53949

Acres: 30.0Price: GiftInterest: Easement and Articles of DedicationImprovements: NoneLocation: The tract is located about five miles south of the Village of Montello.Land Description: The land ranges from level to sloping.

<u>Covertime Breakdown:</u>	Type:	Acreage:
	Pine Plantation	6.0
	Upland/Woodland	24.0
	TOTAL:	30.0

Zoning: NonePresent Use: RecreationProposed Use: Resource Protection and Scientific StudyIntent to Donate Easement Date: October 28, 2009Stewardship Land Access: This property's access will be limited to Department personnel and educational research groups only.2. JUSTIFICATION:

Charles and Barbara Church have offered to donate a 30-acre conservation easement and articles of dedication to the Department for the Statewide Natural Areas program. The parcel is part of the Observatory Hill State Natural Area, which is the highest point in southern Marquette County. The parcel is an isolated outcropping of rhyolite rising 300 feet above the surrounding landscape. The fine-grained rhyolite, an igneous rock embedded with feldspar crystals, is highly resistant to erosion and has been dated to 1.76 billion years ago. The exposed rock faces at the summit have grooves and striations created by the passage of the glacial ice sheet 12,000 years ago.

The Statewide Natural Areas 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 used for study by elementary to college-age school groups and researchers. The highest point in Marquette County is Observatory Hill, an isolated outcropping of porphyritic rhyolite rising 300 feet above the surrounding landscape. The fine-grained rhyolite, an igneous rock embedded with feldspar crystals, is highly resistant to erosion and has been dated to 1.76 billion years ago. On the exposed rocks at the summit are polished rock surfaces with grooves, striations, and chatter marks created by the passage of the glacial Cary ice sheet 12,000 years ago.

Recently, scientists have discovered the existence of petroglyphs on the hill's rock outcroppings, which may be part of a larger prehistoric petroform found in Marquette County. The slopes are covered with a southern dry forest community dominated by red and white oak, basswood and shagbark hickory and much of the area is now being restored to oak savanna, an imperiled vegetation community in Wisconsin. Near the top of the hill, bedrock is exposed or close to the surface creating acidic conditions where a specialized glade community has developed. Red cedar dominates the glade and the thin soils support a sparse ground cover of mosses, ferns, and lichens. The state-threatened slender bush clover is also found on the site. The hill has long been known by naturalists and was a favorite childhood haunt of John Muir who lived nearby. Observatory Hill is owned by the Department and was designated a State Natural Area in 1989.

The Department recommends acceptance of the donation of the 30-acre conservation easement and articles of dedication from Charles and Barbara Church to protect the natural values of this site, and provide access for scientific and educational study.

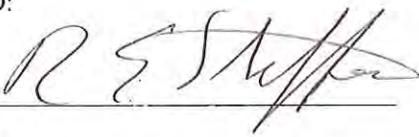
3. FINANCING:

No funding is required for this transaction.

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE STATEWIDE NATURAL AREA:

Established: 1972
Acres Purchased to Date: 42,559.00
Acquisition Goal: 41,000.00
Percent Complete: 103.80%
Cost to Date: \$22,675,592.90

RECOMMENDED:


Richard E. Steffes

11-6-09
Date


Legal Services

11/9/09
Date


Laurie Osterndorf

11/10/09
Date

Acknowledgment Of Gift

This is to certify that at its December 2009, the Natural Resources Board gratefully accepted a gift of a 30-acre easement with articles of dedication from

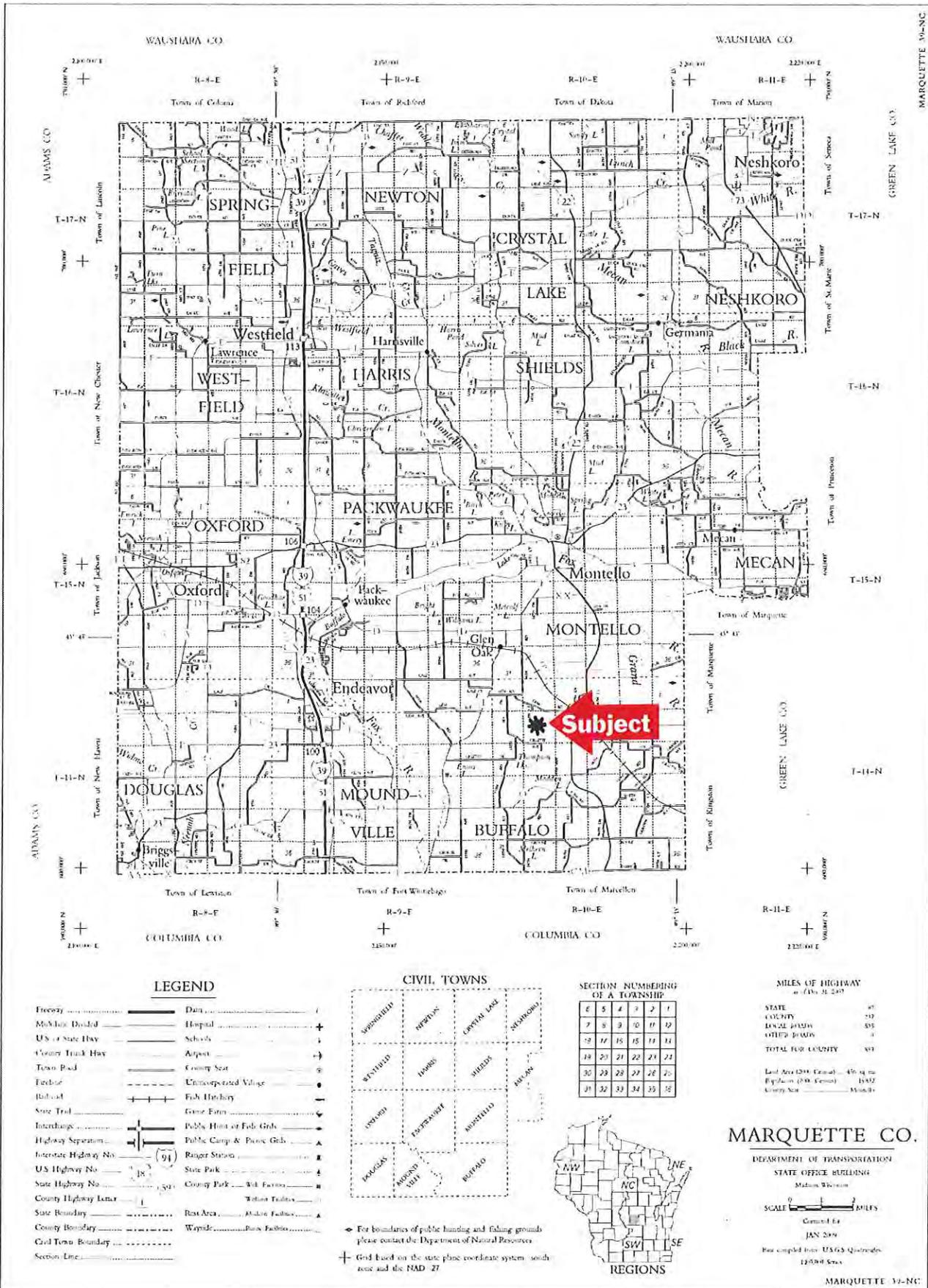
CHARLES AND BARBARA CHURCH

The easement will be for the Observatory Hill State Natural Area in Marquette County. It is significant that individuals such as yourself are interested in helping protect Wisconsin's natural heritage and contribute materially toward this end.

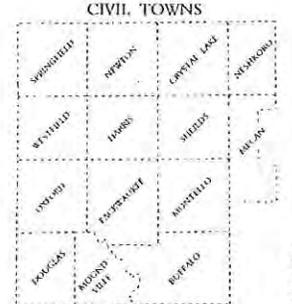
An expression of our appreciation is a part of the official records of the Natural Resources Board. We present this certificate of sincere appreciation on behalf of present and future generations to thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

Natural Resources Board

Christine L. Thomas, CHAIR



- LEGEND**
- Freeway
 - Multiple Divided
 - US or State Hwy
 - County Truck Hwy
 - Town Road
 - Fordor
 - Railroad
 - State Trail
 - Interchange
 - Highway Separation
 - Interstate Highway No.
 - US Highway No.
 - State Highway No.
 - County Highway Letter
 - State Boundary
 - County Boundary
 - Civil Town Boundary
 - Section Line
 - Dam
 - Hospital
 - Schools
 - Airport
 - County Seat
 - Unincorporated Village
 - Fish Hatchery
 - Game Farm
 - Public Hunt or Fish Gnd.
 - Public Camp & Basic Gnd.
 - Ranger Station
 - State Park
 - County Park
 - Wilderness
 - Rest Area
 - Wayside
 - Mobile Facility
 - Basic Facility



SECTION NUMBERING OF A TOWNSHIP

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

MILES OF HIGHWAY
as of 10/31/2017

STATE	87
COUNTY	519
TOWNSHIP	535
OTHER	1
TOTAL FOR COUNTY	832

Land Area (2014 Census) - 456 sq. mi.
Population (2014 Census) - 13,552
County Seat - Montello



◆ For boundaries of public hunting and fishing grounds please contact the Department of Natural Resources
+ Grid based on the state plane coordinate system south zone and the NAD 27

MARQUETTE CO.
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OFFICE BUILDING
MADISON, WISCONSIN

SCALE 0 1 2 MILES
Corrected 1:4
JAN 2016
Data compiled from USGS Quads
125504 Series

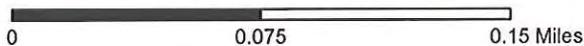
MARQUETTE 30-NC

Charles and Barbara Church Easement

T14N R10E Section 8, Town of Buffalo, Marquette County, WI (30.00 Acres)



D 5005
Statewide
Natural Area



Created by Bureau of Facilities and Lands
Real Estate Section
November 2, 2009



Charles and Barbara Church Easement

T14N R10E Section 8
Town of Buffalo
Marquette County, WI
(30.00 Acres)



D 5005

Statewide
Natural Area

	PLSS Section
	Project Boundary
	WDNR Owned
	WDNR Easement
	Easement
	State Natural Area



The DNR Managed Lands represent the boundaries of lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin DNR manages Wisconsin's natural resources and provides information on the Wisconsin DNR Bureau of Facilities and Lands (LF), and may include errors and/or omissions. The data should not be interpreted as a legal representation of legal ownership boundaries.

This data set does not differentiate between lands that are open or closed to the public for hunting and/or general public access. Some lands represented in this data set may not be open to the general public, or may be open to the general public but with restrictions. This data set is not intended for use 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 this natural management, including public use and public access of the land, visit the Wisconsin DNR website at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/bureaus/bureauoflandandwater/landandwater/landandwater.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

November 2, 2009

