

**SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION – STATEWIDE NATURAL AREAS – ONEIDA AND VILAS COUNTIES**

**FOR: DECEMBER 2009 BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes**

**SUMMARY:** The Department has obtained an agreement to purchase 1095.9 acres of land from the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) for \$902,000 for the Statewide Natural Areas program. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000. Department ownership of these lands will ensure permanent protection of the conservation values. The parcel acreages and costs are outlined in the chart below.

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>PRICE</u>
Statewide Natural Area, Enterprise Hemlocks - (NA-20034)	Oneida	600.0	\$480,000
Statewide Natural Area, Upper Buckatabon Springs - (NA-20035)	Vilas	120.0	\$300,000
Statewide Natural Area, Gobler Lake - (NA-20037)	Oneida	<u>375.9</u>	<u>\$122,000</u>
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	1,095.9	\$902,000

Signed into law on April 19, 2006, Wisconsin Act 352 sets aside \$2,000,000 per year from 2007 through 2010 from the Stewardship fund to acquire land from BCPL. This allows the Department to preserve high quality natural area land and consolidate department land ownership for other conservation projects. Further, the legislation provides for BCPL's use of the sale proceeds to acquire working forestland for timber management and public access.

BCPL has owned its land since statehood and for over 50 years has worked cooperatively with the Department to protect high quality lands. This history has resulted in land qualities undiminished by extensive logging, agriculture and other human disturbances in many cases.

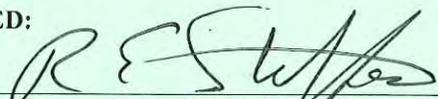
Of all three areas to be acquired at this time, Gobler Lake Natural Area is an existing project (on county land, by MOU). It is being expanded by the 375.9 acres of BCPL land. The other two, Enterprise Hemlocks and Upper Buckatabon Springs, are new natural areas. The project boundaries will be identical to the current proposed acquisition. Further study and working with county government on neighboring parcels may result in expanded boundaries in the future.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the purchase of 1,095.9 acres of land for \$902,000 for the Statewide Natural Areas program.

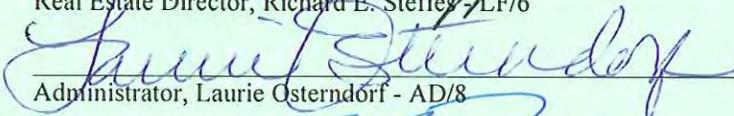
**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

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

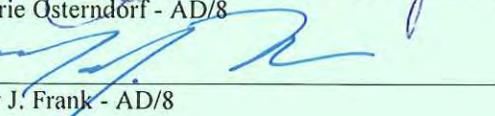
**APPROVED:**

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

11-19-09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

11/20/09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

11/20/09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

- cc: S. Miller – LF/6
- R. Steffes – LF/6
- L. Ross – AD/8
- S. Holtz – ER/6
- J. Gozdialski – NOR/Spooner

## CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 3, 2009 FILE REF: NA 20034, NA 20035 & NA-20020037

TO: Governor Doyle

FROM: Matthew J. Frank *MJF*

SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) Tract, File # NA 20034, NA 20035 and NA 20037, Approval requested by January 20, 2010

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>PRICE</u>
Statewide Natural Area, Enterprise Hemlocks - (NA-20034)	Oneida	600.0	\$480,000
Statewide Natural Area, Upper Buckatabon Springs - (NA-20035)	Vilas	120.0	\$300,000
Statewide Natural Area, Gobler Lake - (NA-20037)	Oneida	375.9	\$122,000
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	1,095.9	\$902,000

Grantor:

Board of Commissioners of Public Lands  
Tia Nelson, Executive Director  
125 South Webster Street  
Madison, WI 53708

Statewide Natural Area (Enterprise Hemlocks) - Oneida County (NA 20034):Acres: 600Price: \$480,000Appraised Value: \$480,000Interest: Fee Title AcquisitionImprovements: NoneLocation: The five parcels area located in Oneida County about eight miles southeast of the City of Rhinelander in the Town of Enterprise.Land Description: Topography of the parcels varies from level in the lowlands to rolling across the uplands.Covertypes Breakdown:

Type:	Acreage:
Wooded Lowland	300
Wetland	145
Upland forest	155
Total:	600

Zoning: NonePresent Use: Timber management and public recreationProposed Use: Resource management and public recreationStewardship 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.

**Statewide Natural Area (Upper Buckatobon Springs) - Vilas County (NA 20035):**

Acres: 120  
Price: \$300,000  
Appraised Value: \$300,000  
Interest: Fee Title Acquisition  
Improvements: None

Location: The property is located in east-central Vilas County in the Town of Conover.

Land Description: The land is mainly lowland.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	Type:	Acreage:
	Wooded Upland	47
	Wooded Lowland	<u>73</u>
	Total:	120

Zoning: Rural residential and forestry  
Present Use: Timber management and public recreation  
Proposed Use: Resource protection and public recreation

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.

**Statewide Natural Area (Gobler Lake) - Oneida County (NA 20037):**

Acres: 375.9  
Price: \$122,000  
Appraised Value: \$122,000  
Interest: Fee Title Acquisition  
Improvements: None

Location: The parcels area located in Oneida County about 15 miles north of the City of Tomahawk in the Town of Little Rice.

Land Description: Topography of the parcels varies from level in the lowlands to rolling across the uplands.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	Type:	Acreage:
	Wooded Lowland	365.9
	Upland Woods	<u>10.0</u>
	Total:	375.9

Zoning: Forestry  
Present Use: Timber management and public recreation  
Proposed Use: Resource management and public recreation

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 an agreement to purchase 1,095.9-acres of land from the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL). The agreement includes three tracts of lands located in three separate projects. Department ownership of the property will provide opportunities to protect species habitat, provide additional opportunities for public recreation and education, and insure long-term resource protection.

Statewide Natural Area – Enterprise Hemlocks – Oneida County:

Enterprise Hemlocks features stands of mature mesic forest heavily dominated by hemlock with some very old trees present. In the mid 1980's, road crews cut 13 hemlocks for a road improvement project. Upon inspection, a DNR wildlife biologist concluded that four trees were over 200 years in age. One tree had a year of origin of 1720 leading to the conclusion that this area may have escaped harvest during the logging era. Small boggy conifer swamp and ephemeral ponds are scattered throughout the site in kettle depressions. Larger wetland areas are dominated by extensive acreage of black spruce muskeg and white cedar swamp. Rare plants include the showy lady's-slipper orchid and small yellow lady's-slipper orchid. The surrounding county forestlands also contain good examples of these community types, including northern hardwoods. Site acquisition, thus, affords a rare opportunity, in cooperation with Oneida County, to maintain extensive, intact examples of representative northern Wisconsin communities and their associated biota on a landscape scale.

Statewide Natural Area – Upper Buckatabon Springs – Vilas County:

Upper Buckatabon Springs features a complex of at least five undeveloped soft-water springs and spring ponds that drain into the upper reaches of the Wisconsin River. Collectively, these springs are highly important in maintaining water quality and quantity of the upper Wisconsin River. Such a concentration of soft-water springs is unusual in this region and within this watershed. Club-spur orchids grow along the spring pond margin while emergent and floating-leaved aquatics are found within the springs. The stream supports an abundance of aquatic macrophyte vegetation that provides significant habitat for aquatic invertebrates and other native wildlife species. Associated wetlands include shrubby shore fen, alder thicket, northern sedge meadow, and tamarack swamp. The surrounding uplands support good quality stands of mixed red pine and white pine with some mature jack pine present locally. A tiny stand and scattered inclusions of old growth red pine occur on a narrow ridge and a steep side slope in the northeastern corner of the site. Fire scars are common on many of these larger trees. Along some of the swamp margins are mature second growth stands of spruce and fir with scattered large remnant white cedars. Mature big-tooth aspen with red oak is present in the northeastern most forty.

Statewide Natural Area - Gobbler Lake - Oneida County:

Gobbler Lake Peatlands features a large muskeg dominated by sphagnum moss and sedge with stunted black spruce and white pine. To the south is Gobbler Lake an undeveloped, soft-water bog lake located within a 470-acre designated State Natural Area owned by Oneida County (SNA #115). A prominent esker runs along the lake's south shore and is forested with second growth pine. The vast peat land supports the full spectrum of peat communities from open bog, muskeg, to closed canopy spruce swamp. The muskeg contains dwarf mistletoe, a parasite on black spruce, several ericaceous shrubs, pitcher plant, sundews, sedges, three-way sedge, beak rushes, and cotton grasses. Several small islands are scattered through the site and are forested with second-growth stands of red pine, white pine, or spruce/fir. Though most of the patches of upland pine forest are small in extent, the scale represented here is part of the natural range of variability of this community type, both historically and currently. The expansive open peat lands and dense spruce swamps provide breeding habitat for habitat specialists and area sensitive bird species. Breeding birds include black and white, Canada, and Connecticut warblers, and Lincoln's sparrow. This area is heavily used by several wolf packs. In aggregate, this large wetland complex represents a diverse interactive mosaic of natural communities and aquatic features with a wilderness aspect.

In 2006, Wisconsin Act 352 set aside \$2,000,000 per year from Stewardship funds to acquire lands from BCPL. These lands were identified by DNR staff as a State Natural Areas priority acquisition for FY09 and will be added to the Gobler Lake State Natural Area, which was designated in 1974. This project will be under the Statewide State Natural Areas acquisition authority.

Summary:

The Department recommends the purchase of all of the above-described properties totaling 1,095.9 acres to allow management to insure public access for recreation and provide resource protection. The parcels block well with existing department lands and will consolidate department ownership for these conservation projects.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to BCPL program (FY10):	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$2,170,800*	\$832,800

\*Includes \$170,800 carryover from FY09

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE STATEWIDE NATURAL AREAS:

Established: 1972  
Acres Purchased to Date: 42,559.0  
Acquisition Goal: 41,000.0 acres  
Percent Complete: 103.80%  
Cost to Date: \$22,674,624.90

5a. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: William Steigerwaldt  
Valuation Date: May 8, 2009  
Appraised Value: \$480,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Recreation and assemblage

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 600.0 acres @ \$800.00 per acre: \$480,000.00
- b. market data approach used, five comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$746.00 to \$840.00 per acre

Appraisal Review: Mary Zickermann – September 14, 2009

5b. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: William Steigerwaldt  
Valuation Date: April 23, 2009  
Appraised Value: \$300,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Recreation

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 120.0 acres @ \$2,500.00 per acre: \$300,000.00
- b. market data approach used, four comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$2,000 to \$2,655 per acre

Appraisal Review: Mary Zickermann – September 14, 2009

5c. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: William Steigerwaldt  
Valuation Date: August 24, 2009  
Appraised Value: \$122,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Assemblage

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 375.9 acres @ \$325.00 per acre: \$122,000.00
- b. market data approach used, four comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$315 to \$330 per acre

Appraisal Review: Mary Zickermann – September 14, 2009

RECOMMENDED:

  
 Richard E. Steffes

11-3-09  
 Date

  
 Bureau of Legal Services

11/4/09  
 Date

  
 Laurie Osterndorf

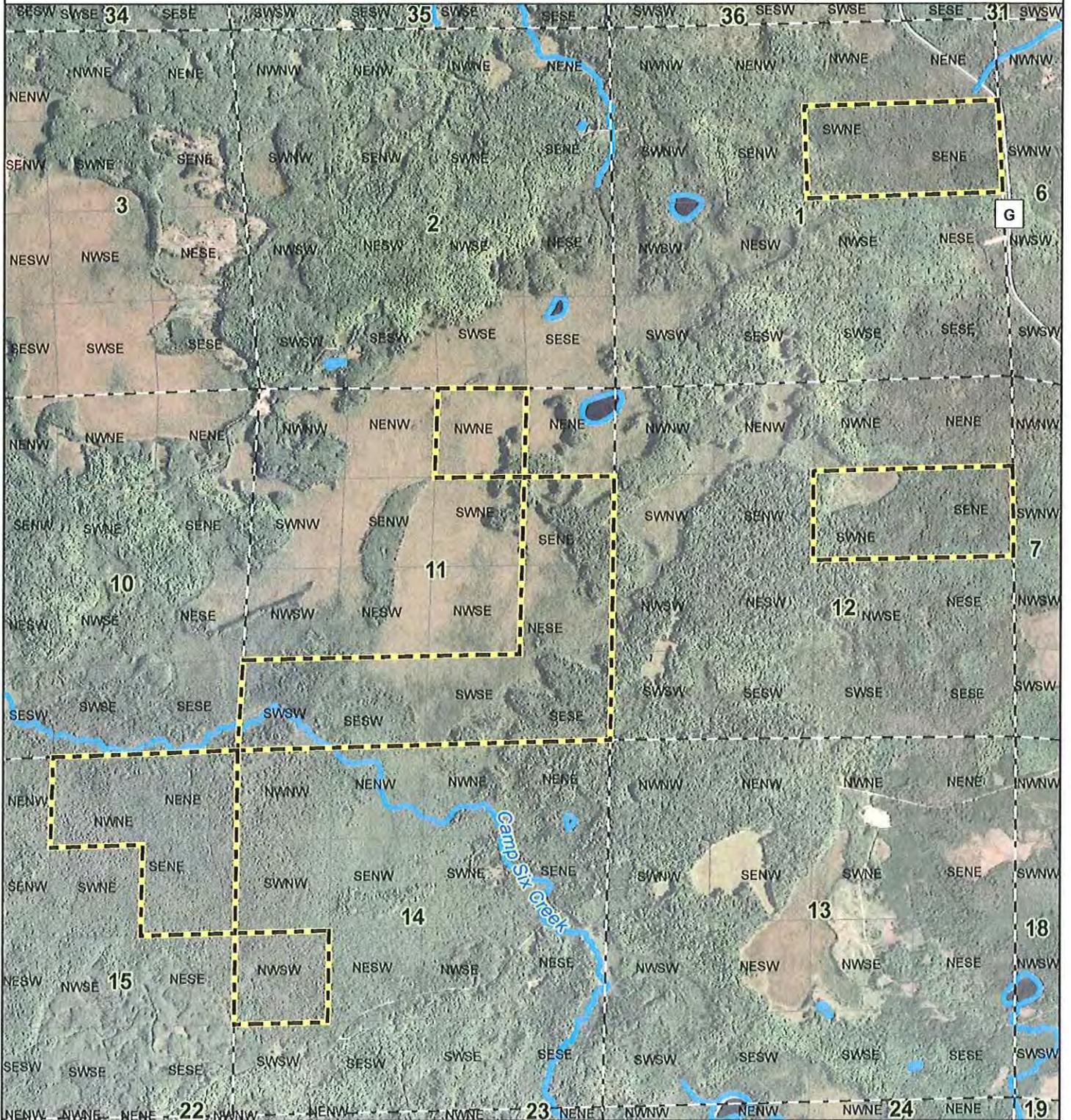
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# BCPL Parcels Enterprise Hemlocks

T35N R9E Sections 1, 11, 12, 14, 15, Town of Enterprise, Oneida County, WI (600 Acres)



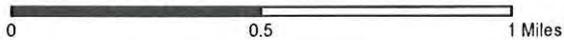
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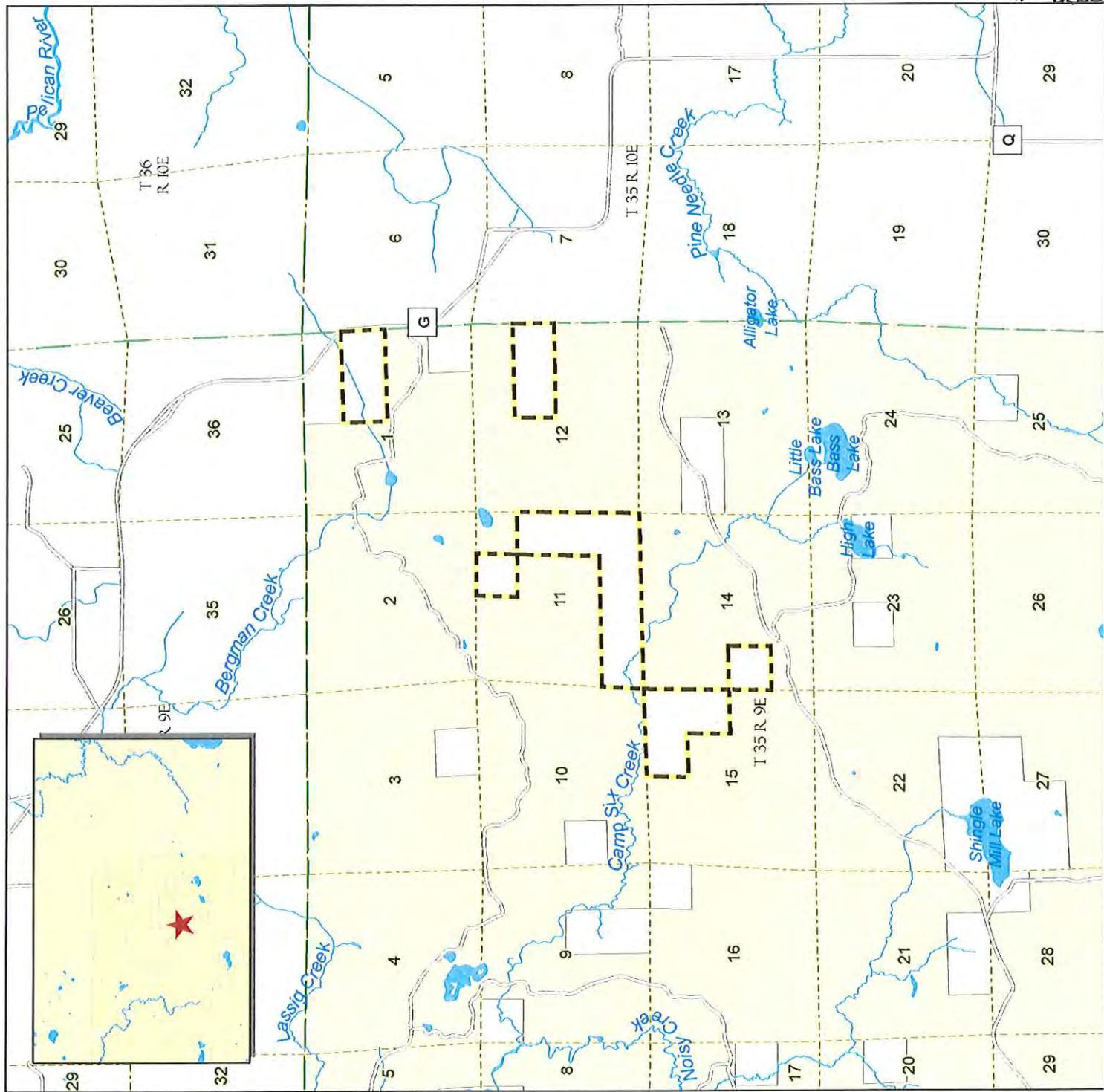
- - - PLSS Section Line
- PLSS Quarter-Quarter
- ▭ DNR Project Boundary
- ▭ County Boundary
- ▭ DNR Eased
- ▭ DNR Owned

**Subject Property**  
**NA 20034**

Statewide  
Natural Area

- ▭ Fee Simple
- ▭ Easement
- ▭ Ingress/Egress





**BCPL Parcels**  
**Enterprise Hemlocks**

T35N R9E Sections 1, 11, 12, 14, 15  
Town of Enterprise  
Oneida County, WI  
(600 Acres)

NA 20034  
Statewide  
Natural Area

	PLSS Section
	Project Boundary
	WDNR Owned
	WDNR Easement
	Fee Simple
	State Natural Area
	County Forest



The DNR Managed Lands represent the boundaries of lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. This data set is a spatial representation of the Oregon Land Records System maintained by the DNR, Bureau of Facilities and Lands (LFL), and may include errors and/or omissions. This data should not be interpreted as a legal representation of legal ownership boundaries.

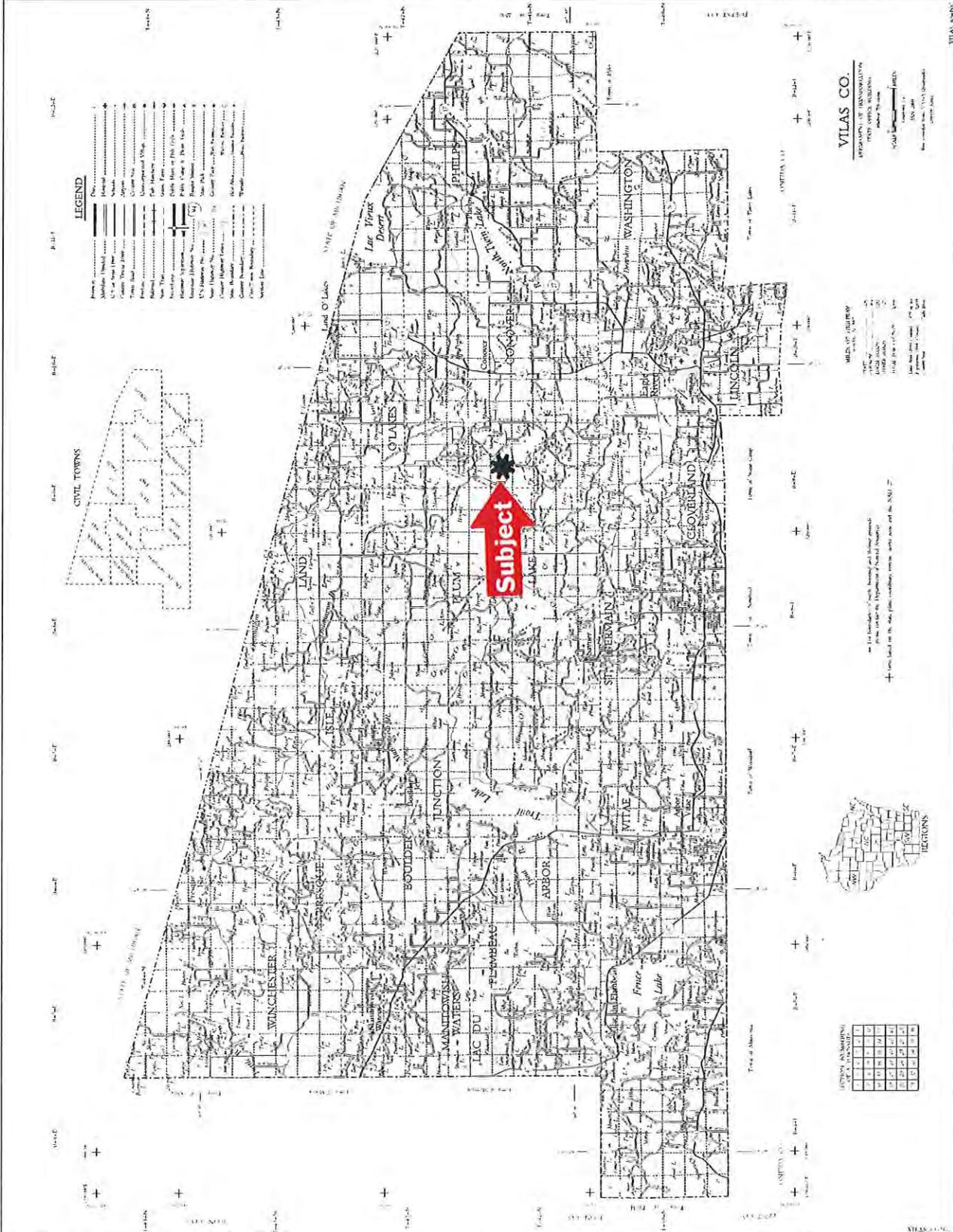
This data set does not differentiate between lands that are open or closed to the public for hunting and/or general public access. Some lands may have specific limitations or restrictions on public use. This data set is not intended for use as a land management tool. It is a listing of all DNR managed lands 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/cerc/locations.htm>

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

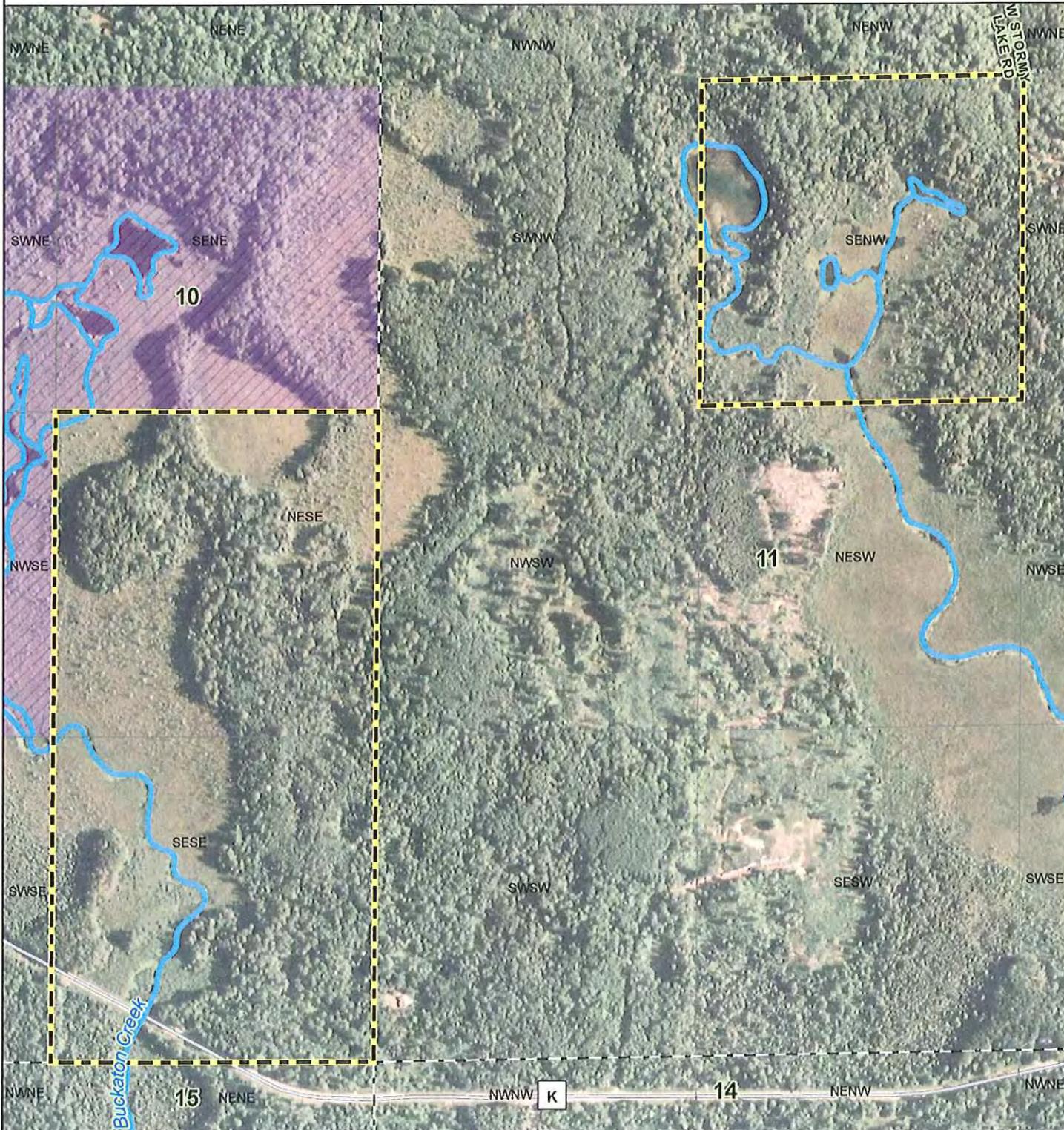
STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Bureau of Facilities and Lands  
November 13, 2009



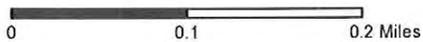
# BCPL Parcels Buckatabon Springs

T41N R9E Sections 10, 11, Town of Conover, Vilas County, WI (120 Acres)



### Legend

- - - PLSS Section Line
- PLSS Quarter-Quarter
- DNR Project Boundary
- County Boundary
- DNR Eased
- DNR Owned



**Subject Property**  
**NA 20035**

Statewide  
Natural Area

- Fee Simple
- Easement
- Ingress/Egress



# BCPL Parcels

Buckatabon Springs  
T41N R9E Sections 10, 11  
Town of Conover  
Vilas County, WI  
(120 Acres)

NA 20035  
Statewide  
Natural Area

	PLSS Section
	Project Boundary
	WDNR Owned
	WDNR Easement
	Fee Simple
	State Natural Area
	County Forest



The DNR Managed Lands represent the boundaries of lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin DNR manages the State's natural resources and is responsible for the maintenance of the public lands records system. The Wisconsin DNR Bureau of Facilities and Lands (F&L) may include errors and/or omissions. This 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 under certain conditions. This data set is not intended for use as a land management tool. It is a listing of all DNR fee simple transactions that have occurred on these lands over time.

For information about the actual management, including public use and public access of the Wisconsin DNR's Bureau of Facilities and Lands, contact the following information for DNR Regional Office and Service Centers is provided on the following internet site:

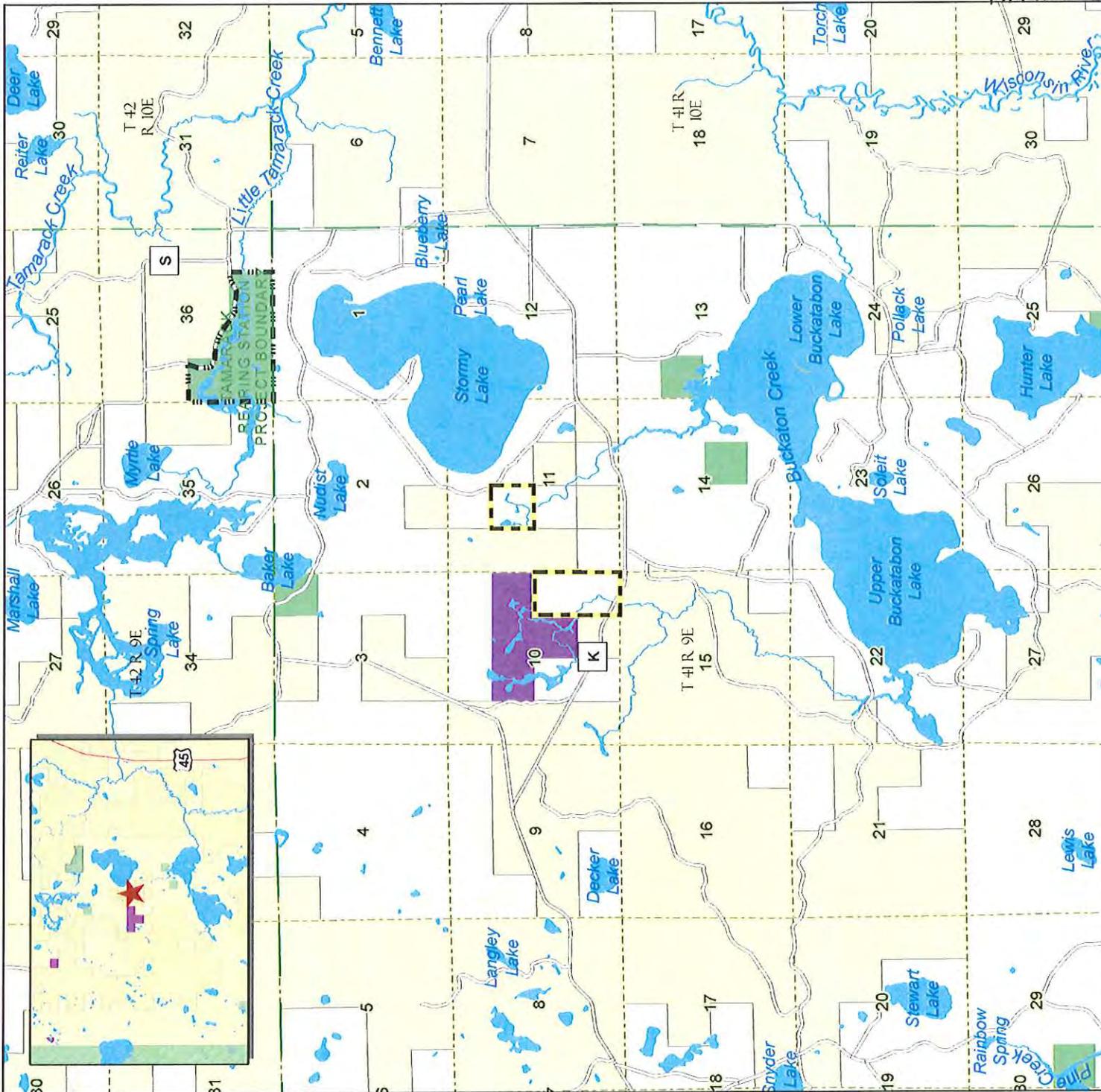
<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/cerc/office/officecontacts.htm>

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

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES



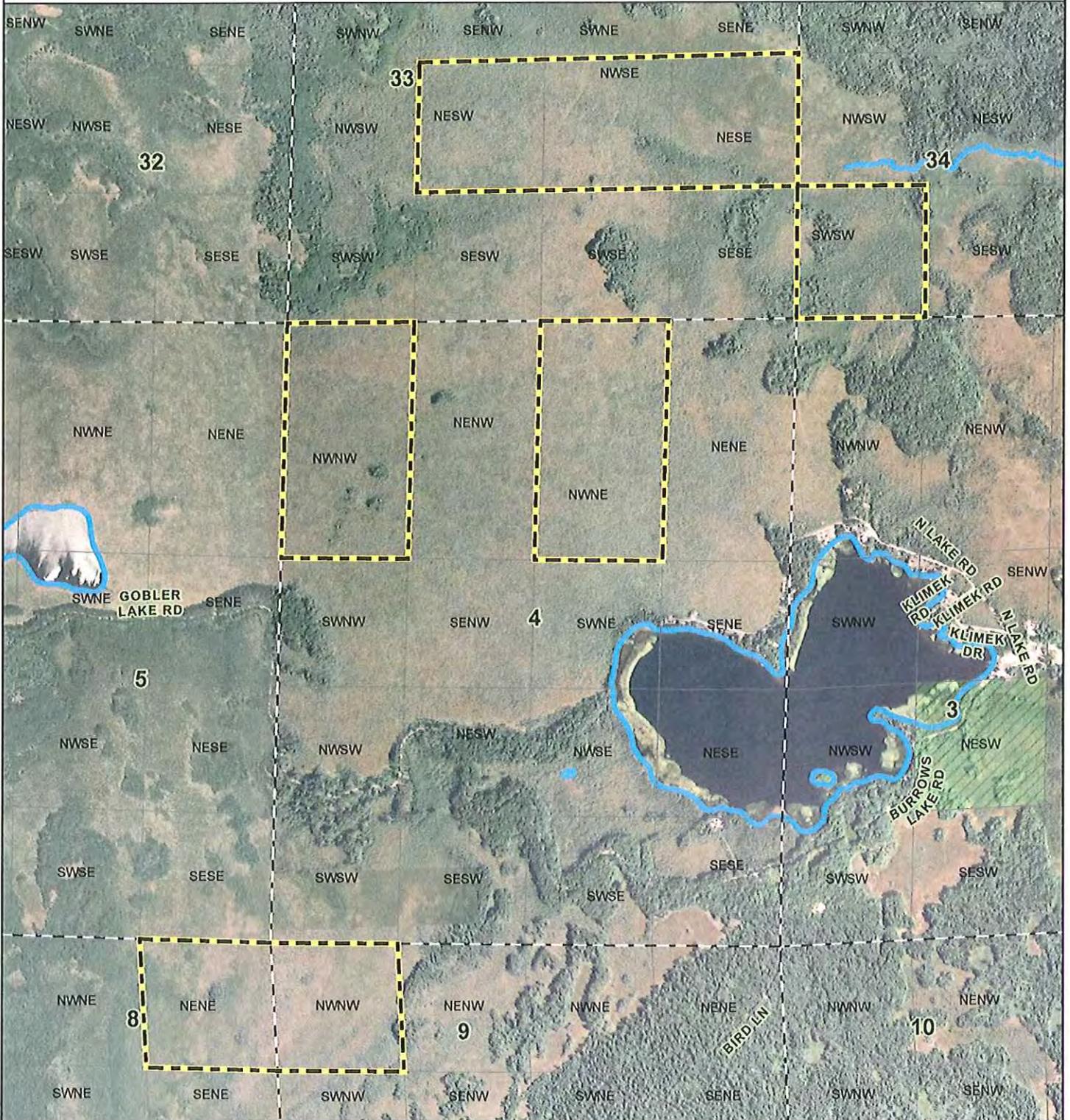
Bureau of Facilities and Lands  
November 13, 2009





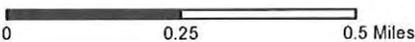
# BCPL Parcels

## T36N R5E Sections 4, 8, 9; and T37N R5E Sections 33, 34, Town of Little Rice, Oneida County, WI (375.9 Acres)



### Legend

- - - PLSS Section Line
- PLSS Quarter-Quarter
- DNR Project Boundary
- County Boundary
- DNR Eased
- DNR Owned

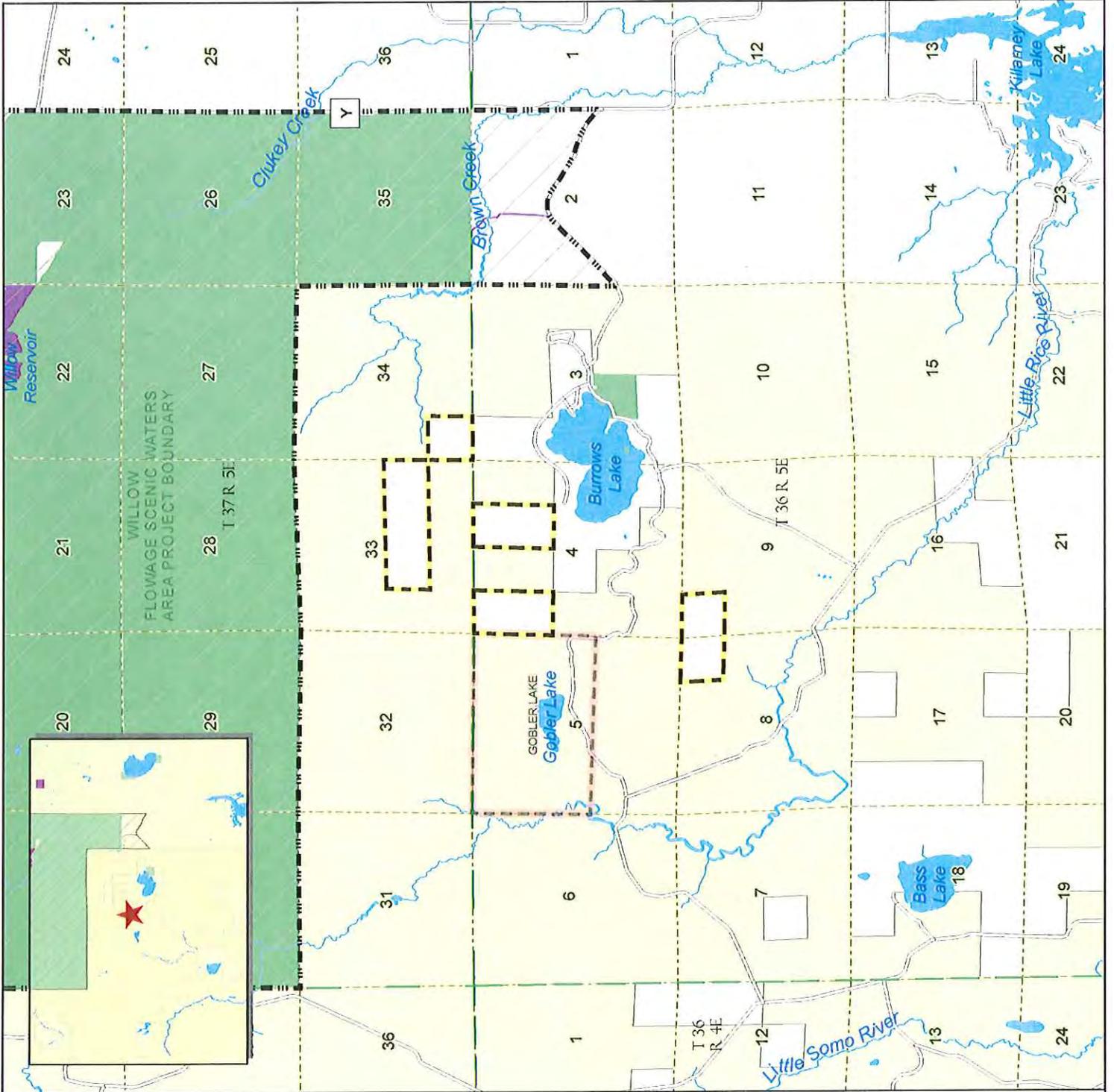


**Subject Property**  
**NA 20037**

Statewide  
Natural Area

- Fee Simple
- Easement
- Ingress/Egress





**BCPL Parcels**  
**Gobler Lake**

T36N R5E Sections 4, 8, 9  
T37N R5E Sections 33, 34  
Town of Little Rice  
Oneida County, WI  
(375.9 Acres)

NA 20037  
Statewide  
Natural Area

	PLSS Section
	Project Boundary
	WDNR Owned
	WDNR Easement
	Fee Simple
	State Natural Area
	County Forest



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<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/dof/bu/landmanagement/locations.htm>

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

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November 13, 2009