

SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION – STATEWIDE NATURAL AREAS – WAUSHARA COUNTY

FOR: MAY 2010 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Department has obtained an option to purchase 98.8 acres of land from Weymouth Estates Tree Farm, Inc. for \$331,000 for the Statewide Natural Areas in Waushara County. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000.

The property is located approximately 2-½ miles east of the Village of Plainfield in Waushara County and about 14 miles northwest of Wautoma. The property includes nearly all of Fiddle Lake (1,300 feet of shoreline), and the west portion (800 feet of shoreline) of Weymouth Lake. The property lies within the Plainfield Tunnel Channel Lakes project boundary with department-owned lands about one mile to the west. Access to this property is from Apache Road on the south boundary. The property is enrolled in Managed Forest Law (MFL) having 98.8 acres of a mixture of red and white pine plantations and native stands of black, red and bur oak. The property is largely used for timber revenue and recreation purposes.

Plainfield Tunnel Channel Lakes were designated a State Natural Area in 1990. The goal is to protect the shorelines of five lakes in a string of 13 lakes and ponds lying in a "tunnel channel" created by a meltwater river flowing beneath the glacial ice. The lake basins were created from buried blocks of ice left behind when the tunnel collapsed. This area provides specialized habitat for one of our rarest plants, Fassett's Locoweed and many-headed sedge and rock stitchwort (both species of special concern). This federally-threatened and state-endangered member of the legume family with magenta flowers and silvery-green leaves is endemic to Wisconsin. It grows here and nowhere else. It is only found at eight lakes and is adapted to the sandy shores of shallow seepage lakes whose shorelines fluctuate widely over months or years depending on rainfall and drought patterns. When the shore is exposed, locoweed seeds in the seed bank germinate, grow, flower, and drop seeds. The plant requires open, sunny habitat and relies on periodic flooding to kill shade-producing trees that invade the shoreline in dry years. Locoweed survives inundation, up to years at a time, by persisting in the lake bottom's seed bank until the water levels drop. While shading and competition by trees and other plants are the primary natural threats, trampling by humans and disturbance from off-road vehicles pose far more serious threats to these sensitive plants. The locoweed population at Weymouth Lake has been over 1,000 plants with about 350 plants occurring on the Weymouth parcel. Acquisition of the property is a priority in the Federal Locoweed Recovery Plan. The long-term goal would be to restore the uplands to oak barrens and Karner Blue Butterfly habitat. Karners are found near this natural area.

Acquisition of this parcel will protect the natural and scientific values of the tract and allow natural area management, to increase habitat for the state endangered Fassett's Locoweed, allow public access to the parcel and consolidate state ownership in this area of the project.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of 98.8 acres of land for \$331,000 for the Statewide Natural Areas in Waushara County.

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 |

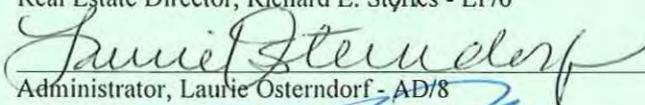
APPROVED:



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

4-2-10

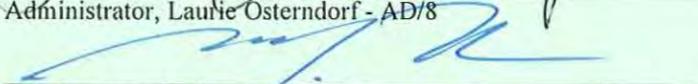
Date



Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

4/5/10

Date


Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

5-5-10

Date

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

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 31, 2010 FILE REF: NA 20044
 TO: Governor Doyle
 FROM: Matthew J. Frank
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Weymouth Estates Tree Farm, Inc. Tract, File # NA 20044, Option Expires August 25, 2010

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Statewide Natural Areas
 Waushara County

Grantor:

Weymouth Estates Tree Farm, Inc.
 c/o Richard Weymouth
 170 3rd Street N
 Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

Acres: 98.8
Price: \$331,000
Appraised Value: \$331,000
Interest: Fee title acquisition
Improvements: None

Location: The property is located in Waushara County about 2.5 miles east of Plainfield and about 14 miles northwest of Wautoma in the Town of Oasis.

Land Description: The land is a mixture of red and white pine plantations and native stands of black, red and bur oak.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	<u>Type:</u>	<u>Acreage:</u>
	Brush	6.8
	Upland Woodland	23.0
	Pine Plantation	62.0
	Water/Wetland	7.0
	TOTAL:	98.8

Zoning: Agriculture

Present Use: Forestry and Recreation

Proposed Use: Public Recreation

Tenure: 160 years. The property has been in the family since they purchased it in 1849 from the federal government.

Property Taxes: \$284

Option Date: March 11, 2010

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 98.8 acres of land from Weymouth Estates Tree Farm, Inc. for \$331,000 for the Statewide Natural Areas in Waushara County. The property is located approximately 2-½ miles east of the Village of Plainfield in Waushara County and about 14 miles



northwest of Wautoma. The property includes nearly all of Fiddle Lake (1,300 feet of shoreline), and the west portion (800 feet of shoreline) of Weymouth Lake. The property lies within the Plainfield Tunnel Channel Lakes project boundary with department-owned lands about a mile to the west. Access to this property is from Apache Road on the south boundary. The property is enrolled in Managed Forest Law (MFL) having 98.8 acres of a mixture of red and white pine plantations and native stands of black, red and bur oak. The property is largely used for timber revenue and recreation purposes.

Plainfield Tunnel Channel Lakes were designated a State Natural Areas in 1990. The goal is to protect the shorelines of five lakes in a string of 13 lakes and ponds lying in a "tunnel channel" created by a meltwater river flowing beneath the glacial ice. The lake basins were created from buried blocks of ice left behind when the tunnel collapsed. This area provides specialized habitat for one of our rarest plants, Fassett's Locoweed and many-headed sedge and rock stitchwort, both species of special concern. This federally threatened and state-endangered member of the legume family with magenta flowers and silvery-green leaves is endemic to Wisconsin. It grows here and nowhere else. It is only found at eight lakes and is adapted to the sandy shores of shallow seepage lakes whose shorelines fluctuate widely over months or years depending on rainfall and drought patterns. When the shore is exposed, locoweed seeds in the seed bank germinate, grow, flower, and drop seeds. The plant requires open, sunny habitat and relies on periodic flooding to kill shade-producing trees that invade the shoreline in dry years. Locoweed survives inundation, up to years at a time, by persisting in the lake bottom's seed bank until the water levels drop. While shading and competition by trees and other plants are the primary natural threats, trampling by humans and disturbance from off-road vehicles pose far more serious threats to these sensitive plants. The locoweed population at Weymouth Lake has been over 1,000 plants with about 350 plants occurring on the Weymouth parcel. Acquisition of the property is a priority in the Federal Locoweed Recovery Plan and the Department applied to Fish and Wildlife Service for 50% (\$165,500) of the acquisition cost. The long-term goal would be to restore the uplands to oak barrens and Karner Blue Butterfly habitat. Karners are found near this natural area.

The Department recommends acquisition of this parcel to protect the natural and scientific values of the tract and allow natural area management, to increase habitat for the state endangered fassett's locoweed, to allow public access to the parcel and to consolidate state ownership in this area of the project.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds (FY11) are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$50,000,000	\$26,845,046

Comments: The Department has applied for a Section 6 Fish and Wildlife Service acquisition grant for 50% (\$165,500) of the value of the property. If successful, the state cost will be reduced 50%.

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE STATEWIDE NATURAL AREAS:

Established: 1972
Acres Purchased to Date: 44,323.66
Acquisition Goal: 41,000.00 Acres
Percent Complete: 108.11%
Cost to Date: \$24,082,259.50

5. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: William Steigerwaldt
Valuation Date: December 14, 2009
Appraised Value: \$331,000
Highest and Best Use: Investment and Recreation

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 98.8 acres @ \$3,350.20 per acre: \$331,000
- b. market data approach used, five comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$2,300 to \$5,000

Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter - February 25, 2010

RECOMMENDED:


Richard E. Steffes

4-2-10
Date


Bureau of Legal Services

4-5-10
Date


Laurie Osterndorf

4/5/10
Date

RES:dv

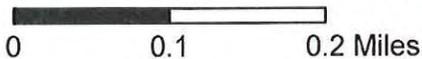
Weymouth Estates Tree Farm, Inc. Parcel

T20N R9E Sections 16 & 21, Town of Oasis, Waushara County, WI (98.80 Acres)



Legend

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



Subject Property

NA 20044

Statewide Natural Area

- Fee Simple
- Easement
- Ingress/Egress

State of Wisconsin

March 23, 2010
Real Estate Section
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

User Advisory: Neither the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) nor any of its employees shall be held liable for any improper or incorrect use of the information and/or contained herein and assumes no responsibility for use of the information. Furthermore, no warranty, expressed or implied, is made regarding accuracy, adequacy, completeness, legality, or reliability of any information. The WDNR provides map information on an "as is" basis. The WDNR has made reasonable efforts to provide accurate information, but cannot exclude the possibility of errors or omissions in source information. There is no guarantee the parcel boundaries are defined by a survey. The map user is expected to exercise reasonable use of the map information.

