

**SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION AND DONATION – SCATTERED FORESTS LANDS – ASHLAND COUNTY**

**FOR: SEPTEMBER 2010 BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Richard Steffes

**SUMMARY:** The Department has obtained an option to purchase 720 acres of land from the Stilin Limited Partnerships for \$936,000 for the Scattered Forest Lands Program in Ashland County. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000 and includes a partial donation of \$85,028. The cash gift is from the John Dolan Dee Estate, with assistance from the Natural Resources Foundation.

The property is located in Ashland County about 10 miles northeast of the City of Mellen and adjoins Copper Falls State Park to the east and state-owned lands to the north. The Stilin property composes a large amount of the view shed offered from the western rim of the Bad River Valley, which is one of the most scenic vistas in the area. The entire parcel is enrolled in the Managed Forest Law Tax program under the open program, which allows for public access. The acquisition of this property would allow for access to an area of the park that currently has no access and the ability to develop trails that overlook the Bad River Valley. This acquisition would provide additional lands for public recreation, and would protect this scenic parcel from development.

The Department proposes to acquire this land under the Scattered Forest Lands category, which allows forestry and wildlife habitat management as well as public hunting. If acquired, the North Country Trail will be sited, developed, and maintained through the property. Dependent upon statutory changes for the North Country Trail to better deal with hunting issues on this large, wooded parcel, the Department may approach the board at a future date requesting a re-designation as a State North Country Trail Area. In addition, the Department will enter into a master planning effort for the adjoining Copper Falls State Park, which could influence designation.

The North Country National Scenic Trail was established as a state project in October of 2000 and has an acquisition goal of 2,050 acres. One of the goals of the North Country National Scenic Trail is to link public lands across the northwestern part of Wisconsin to segments of the trail located in Minnesota and Michigan. The trail corridor will pass through Iron, Ashland, Bayfield and Douglas Counties. Currently, the trail utilizes 170 miles of land within existing public projects, including the Chequamegon National Forest, the Bayfield County Forest, Brule River State Forest, Pattison State Park, Copper Falls State Park, the Douglas County Forest and many others. The concept of the North Country Trail is similar to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in that it allows for long distance, non-motorized travel through scenic and geographically significant areas. When completed, the 4,200-mile trail will extend through seven states going from Crown Point State Historic Site in New York to Sakakawea State Park on the Missouri River in North Dakota where it joins the route of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

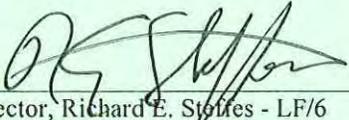
Acquisition of this parcel would allow completion of the North Country Trail east of Copper Falls State Park, provide public access to 800 acres of land within Copper Falls State Park that is currently land-locked, provide numerous recreational opportunities, protect the Bad River Watershed and related viewsheds from within Copper Falls State Park and consolidate state ownership. The acquisition of this parcel is highly desirable for the parks program including both Copper Falls State Park and the North Country National Scenic Trail adding three miles of trail corridor. The Department recently secured trail easements east of the Stilin parcel extending to the Iron County Forest.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the purchase of 720 acres of land for \$936,000 for the Scattered Forest Lands program and accept a donation of \$85,028 to be used toward the purchase.

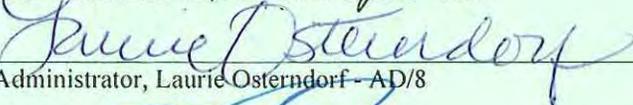
**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

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

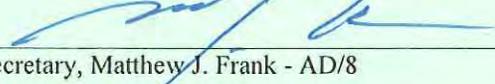
**APPROVED:**

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

8.24-10  
Date

  
Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

8/26/10  
Date

  
Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

9-2-10  
Date

- |                      |                 |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| cc: S. Miller – LF/6 | L. Ross – AD/8  | J. Gozdialski – NOR/Spooner |
| R. Steffes – LF/6    | T. Hauge – WM/6 | D. Schuller – PR/6          |

## CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 24, 2010 FILE REF: WM 60104  
 TO: Governor Doyle  
 FROM: Matthew J. Frank  
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Stilin Limited Partnerships Tract, File WM 60104,  
 Option Expires November 25, 2010

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Scattered Forest Lands  
 Ashland County

Grantor:

General Partners of Stilin Limited Partnerships Tract  
 c/o Tim Lee  
 P.O. Box 915  
 Mellen, WI 54546

Acres: 720Price: \$936,000Appraised Value: \$936,000 (Steigerwaldt); \$900,000 (Olson)Interest: Fee Title PurchaseImprovements: NoneLocation: The property is located in Ashland County about 10 miles northeast of the City of Mellen.Land Description: The subject land is rolling to hilly with steep ravines and drainages.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	<u>Type:</u>	<u>Acreage:</u>
	Upland Woodland	685
	Lowland Woodland	<u>35</u>
	TOTAL:	720

Zoning: Unrestricted DistrictPresent Use: Timber ProductionProposed Use: Resource protection and public outdoor recreationTenure: More than 20 yearsProperty Taxes: \$482.40Option Date: July 29, 2010Comment: Closing by December 31, 2010 is a term of the agreement.Stewardship Land Access: This property will be open to the public for nature-based outdoor recreational activities to include hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and trapping.2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Department proposes to purchase 720 acres from the General Partners of the Stilin Partnerships for \$936,000 for the Scattered Forest Lands in Ashland County about ten miles northeast of the City of Mellen. It adjoins Copper Falls State Park to the east and state-owned lands to the north and is enrolled in the Managed Forest Law Tax program under the open program, which allows for public access. Acquisition of this undeveloped parcel would allow the completion of the North Country Trail east of Copper Falls State Park, provide public access to 800 acres of land within Copper Falls State Park that is currently land-locked, provide numerous recreational opportunities, and protect the Bad River Watershed and related



view sheds from within Copper Falls State Park. The acquisition of this parcel is highly desirable for the Park's program including both Copper Falls State Park and the North Country National Scenic Trail.

The Department proposes to acquire this land under the Scattered Forest Lands category, which allows forestry and wildlife habitat management as well as public hunting and trail use. Dependent upon statutory changes for the North Country Trail to better deal with hunting issues on this large, wooded parcel, the Department may approach the board at a future date requesting a re-designation as a State North Country Trail Area. In addition, the Department will enter into a master planning effort for the adjoining Copper Falls State Park, which could influence designation.

The North Country National Scenic Trail was established as a state project in October of 2000 and has an acquisition goal of 2,050 acres. One of the goals of the North Country National Scenic Trail is to link public lands across the northwestern part of Wisconsin to segments of the trail located in Minnesota and Michigan. The trail corridor will pass through Iron, Ashland, Bayfield and Douglas Counties. Currently, the trail utilizes 170 miles of land within existing public projects, including the Chequamegon National Forest, the Bayfield County Forest, Brule River State Forest, Pattison State Park, Copper Falls State Park, the Douglas County Forest and many others. The concept of the North Country Trail is similar to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in that it allows for long distance, non-motorized travel through scenic and geographically significant areas. When completed, the 4,200-mile trail will extend through seven states going from Crown Point State Historic Site in New York to Sakakawea State Park on the Missouri River in North Dakota where it joins the route of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

The Stilin property composes a large amount of the view shed offered from the western rim of the Bad River Valley. The western rim offers one of the most scenic vistas in the area. Park management has always hoped to one day have access to this area with trails and overlooks. The acquisition of this property would allow for this and, thus, protect the 720 acres of this view shed from development. The Department recently secured several trail easements connecting this land and the park to Iron County forestland to the east.

Acquisition of this parcel would allow the completion of the North Country Trail east of Copper Falls State Park, provide public access to 800 acres of land within Copper Falls State Park that is currently land-locked, provide numerous recreational opportunities, and protect the Bad River Watershed and related view sheds from within Copper Falls State Park. Acquisition of this parcel is highly desirable for the parks program including both Copper Falls State Park and the North Country National Scenic Trail adding three miles of trail corridor.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds (FY 11), Federal LAWCON and private gift funds are anticipated:

	Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
State:	\$50,702,000	\$20,499,334
Federal:	\$ 169,000	\$0
Gift:	\$ 85,028	\$0

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE SCATTERED FOREST LANDS:

Established: 1956  
Acres Purchased to Date: 7,712.51  
Acquisition Goal: 5,352.61  
Percent Complete: 144.1  
Cost to Date: \$2,317,307

5a. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Jeffrey Olson  
Valuation Date: May 6, 2010  
Appraised Value: \$900,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Recreation

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 720 acres @ \$1,250.00 per acre: \$900,000
- b. market data approach used, five comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$1,056.26 to \$1,440.00 per acre

Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter - June 9, 2010

5b.

Appraiser: William Steigerwaldt  
Valuation Date: April 8, 2010  
Appraised Value: \$936,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Larger parcel

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 720.0 acres @ \$1,300.00 per acre: \$936,000
- b. market data approach used, five comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$1,274.00 to \$1,600.00 per acre

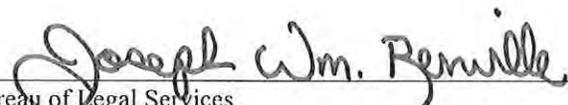
Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter - May 28, 2010

Comment: The option price of \$936,000 is the best price that could be negotiated. Both appraisal reports were well done and close together in value.

RECOMMENDED:

  
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 Richard E. Steffes

8-24-10  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

  
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 Bureau of Legal Services

8-25-10  
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 Date

  
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 Laurie Osterndorf

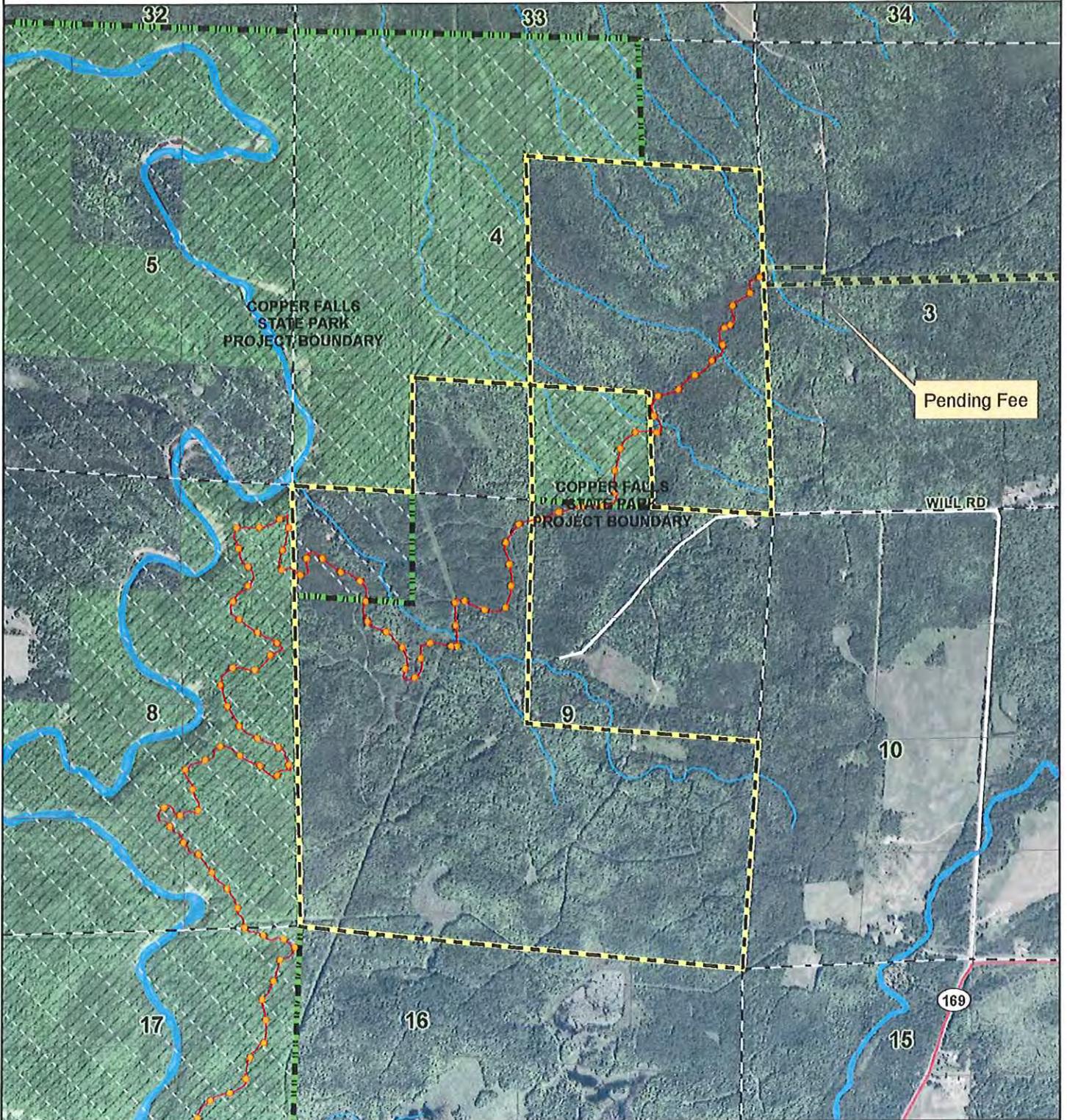
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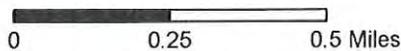
# General Partners, Stilin Limited Partnership - Parcel

T45N R2W Section 4 & 9, Town of Morse, Ashland County, WI (720.00 Acres)



### Legend

- DNR Project Boundary
- County Boundary
- PLSS Section Line
- DNR Eased
- PLSS Quarter-Quarter
- DNR Owned
- North Country Trail / Existing or Possible



### Subject Property

**WM 60104**

Scattered Forest Lands

- Fee Simple
- Easement
- Ingress/Egress

State of Wisconsin

August 6, 2010  
Real Estate Section  
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

Use 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, frequency, completeness, legality, or reliability of any information. The WDNR provides mapped 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.

**General Partners -  
Stiltn Limited Partnership  
Parcel**

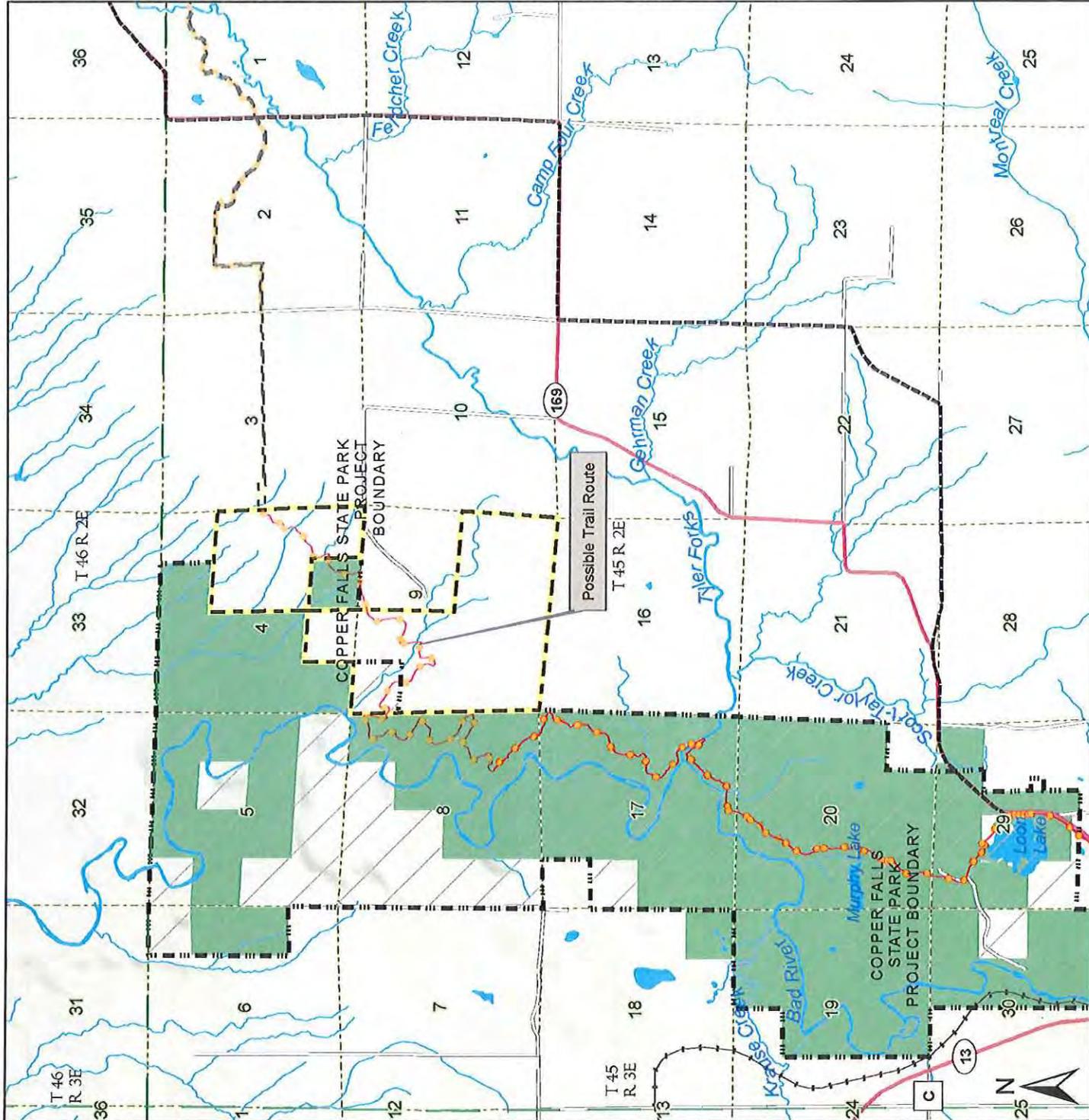
WM 60104

Scattered Forest Lands

T45N R2W Section 4 & 9  
Town of Morse  
Ashland County, WI  
(720 Acres)

- Subject Property**
-  Fee Simple
  -  Easement
  -  Ingress/Egress

-  North Country Trail
-  Pending Easement
-  Pending Fee
-  DNR Project Boundary
-  State Natural Area
-  PLSS Section Line
-  County Boundary
-  DNR Owned
-  DNR Easement



The DNR Managed Lands represent the boundaries of lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin DNR manages these lands through ownership, easement or lease rights. This dataset is a spatial representation of the Oracle Land Records System maintained by the DNR, Bureau of Facilities and Lands (FL), 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 have specific limitations or restrictions on public use. This data set is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an offer of any product or service. 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/office/regions.htm>. Updates to this data set are ongoing, and will be incorporated into future versions when available.