

SUBJECT: LAND TRANSFER AND PROJECT BOUNDARY MODIFICATION – KICKAPOO WILDLIFE AREA – CRAWFORD COUNTY

FOR: MAY 2011 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) has offered to transfer 136.61 acres of land to the Department for the Kickapoo Wildlife Area – Bell Center Unit in Crawford County. The item is being submitted because about 60 acres are outside project boundary.

DOT originally purchased this property for wetland mitigation purposes. The property includes approximately 125 acres of oldfield habitat and 7,637 feet of one bank Kickapoo River frontage as well as 1,758 feet of one bank Crow Hollow Creek frontage. A variety of bottomland hardwood tree species line the banks of the Kickapoo River. Approximately half the property lies within the wildlife area’s acquisition boundary.

The Kickapoo River Wildlife Area, originally a part of the Lower Wisconsin River Wildlife Area, was established in 1975. Located within the Lower Kickapoo River and Kickapoo Conservation Opportunity Area in Wisconsin’s Wildlife Action plan, it is of significance for its Driftless area features. The property is also an Important Bird Area because the forests in the southern portion of this site are among the largest and most intact in the area and contain significant populations of forest interior birds such as red-shouldered hawk, Acadian flycatcher, wood thrush, cerulean warbler, and Kentucky warbler. Prairie and savanna habitats host Bell’s vireo, brown thrasher, blue-winged warbler, field sparrow, bobolink, and eastern meadowlark. Thousands of migratory birds use the area, particularly in spring. The project goals include protecting wildlife habitat, providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, especially hunting and fishing, and to allowing the implementation of wildlife management practices.

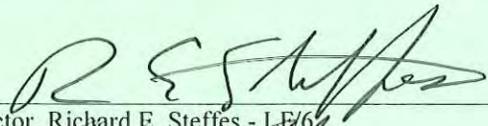
Future habitat enhancement opportunities on this property include grassland, wetland, and bottomland hardwood management. Opportunities to improve public access to the property include the development of a small parking area, which may also serve as a canoe landing site, and a site for property boundary signage. Accepting this transfer will protect the property’s inherent natural values, provide nature-based, outdoor public recreational opportunities, provide meaningful wildlife habitat management and protection possibilities which are not provided under the current DOT management plans and consolidate DNR ownership in this area.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board accept the transfer of DOT’s 136.61 acres of land for \$1.00 for Kickapoo Wildlife Area in Crawford County and approve modification of the project boundary to include the parcel.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

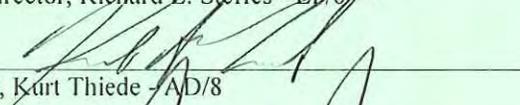
- | | | | |
|--|---|---|----------|
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Fiscal Estimate Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environmental Assessment of Impact Statement Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No <input type="checkbox"/> | Background Memo | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Attached |

APPROVED:



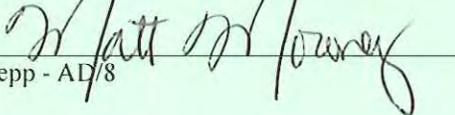
Real Estate Director, Richard E. Steffes - LF/6

4-19-11
Date



Administrator, Kurt Thiede - AD/8

4-21-11
Date



Secretary, Cathy Stepp - AD/8

5-4-11
Date

- cc: S. Miller – LF/6
- R. Steffes – LF/6
- L. Ross – AD/8
- T. Hauge - WM/6
- S. Hummrickhouse – West Central Region

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 19, 2011
 TO: Natural Resources Board
 FROM: Cathy Stepp
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Transfer from Wisconsin Department of Transportation, File # WM 60132

FILE REF: WM 60132

I. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Kickapoo Wildlife Area
 Crawford County

Grantor:

WI Department of Transportation
 c/o Greg Messling
 3550 Mormon Coulee Rd.
 La Crosse, WI 54601

Acres: 136.61
Price: \$1.00
Interest: Fee title
Improvements: None

Location: The property is located in Crawford County in the Town of Haney, on Highway 131

Land Description: The subject land is lowland/wetland

Covertypes Breakdown:

	Type	Acreage
	Wetland	136.61

Zoning: Agriculture
Present Use: Wetland mitigation
Proposed Use: Habitat management and public recreation
Tenure: 15 years
Property Taxes: Exempt
Option Date: n/a

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 Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) has offered to transfer 136.61 acres of land to the Department for the Kickapoo Wildlife Area – Bell Center Unit in Crawford County. The item is being submitted because about 60 acres are outside project boundary.

DOT originally purchased this property for wetland mitigation purposes. The property includes approximately 125 acres of oldfield habitat and 7,637 feet of one bank Kickapoo River frontage as well as 1,758 feet of one



bank Crow Hollow Creek frontage. A variety of bottomland hardwood tree species line the banks of the Kickapoo River. Approximately half the property lies within the wildlife area's acquisition boundary.

The Kickapoo River Wildlife Area, originally a part of the Lower Wisconsin River Wildlife Area, was established in 1975. Located within the Lower Kickapoo River and Kickapoo Conservation Opportunity Area in Wisconsin's Wildlife Action plan, it is of continental significance for its Driftless area features. The property is also an Important Bird Area because the forests in the southern portion of this site are among the largest and most intact in the whole area and contain significant populations of forest interior birds such as red-shouldered hawk, Acadian flycatcher, wood thrush, cerulean warbler, and Kentucky warbler. Prairie and savanna habitats host Bell's vireo, brown thrasher, blue-winged warbler, field sparrow, bobolink, and eastern meadowlark. Thousands of migratory birds use the area, particularly in spring. The project goals include protecting wildlife habitat, providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, especially hunting and fishing, and allowing the implementation of wildlife management practices.

Future habitat enhancement opportunities on this property include grassland, wetland, and bottomland hardwood management. Opportunities to improve public access to the property include the development of a small parking area, which may also serve as a canoe landing site, and a site for property boundary signage. The Department recommends accepting this transfer in order to protect the property's inherent natural values, provide nature-based, outdoor public recreational opportunities, provide meaningful wildlife habitat management and protection possibilities which are not provided under the current DOT management plans and consolidate DNR ownership in this area.

3. FINANCING:

No funds are necessary for this land transfer from DOT.

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE Kickapoo Wildlife Area:

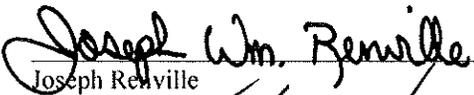
Established: 1975
Acres Purchased to Date: 7,113.16
Acquisition Goal: 8,958.00
Percent Complete: 79.41 %
Cost to Date: \$1,825,383.80

RECOMMENDED:



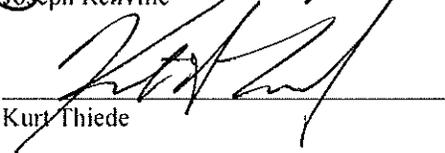
Richard E. Steffes

4-19-11
Date



Joseph Renville

4-20-11
Date



Kurt Thiede

4-21-11
Date

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Mitigation Transfer

Kickapoo Wildlife Area - Bell Center Unit

Pre Acquisition

T09N R04W Sections 3 & 10
Town of Haney
Crawford County
(136.61 acres--deed)

Subject Parcel

- Project Boundary
- WDNR Owned
- WDNR Easement
- PLSS Section Line
- QQ Section Boundary



Subject Property

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Map Created: April 15, 2011 .swm

