

**SUBJECT:** Land Acquisition – Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area – Waukesha County

**FOR:** OCTOBER 2013 BOARD MEETING

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Douglas J Haag, Acting Real Estate Director – Tim Lizzote

**SUMMARY:** The Department has obtained an option to purchase 99.98 acres of land from the Wallace K. and June M. Rieger Trust and John Rieger and Carol Rieger for \$700,000 for the Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area in Waukesha County. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000.

Big Muskego Lake (BML) Wildlife Area located in southeast Wisconsin, was established in 1999 to protect the area surrounding this unique and productive shallow lake following a successful lake rehabilitation project. Prior to rehabilitation, the lake was a turbid, carp-dominated open expanse of shallow water. The rehabilitation project consisted of an 18 month drawdown coupled with removal of the rough fish, resulting in a clear water shallow lake containing high quality habitat for gamefish and wildlife. Since that time, the City of Muskego, the Wind Lake Management District (WLMD), and the Department have partnered to protect hundreds of acres around the lake.

BML is recognized as a Wisconsin Important Bird Area. Its proximity to the state's largest urban center notwithstanding, the lake contains significant habitats for wetland birds. It hosts breeding populations of both Forster's and black terns as well as marsh wrens, yellow-headed blackbirds, bitterns, rails, and waterfowl. BML was one of the first places in southeast Wisconsin to which nesting ospreys and bald eagles returned. Great egrets, American white pelicans, and Caspian terns use the lake for foraging, and it also gets significant use as a stopover site by migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. The lake has also become a destination fishery, with abundant populations of quality size largemouth bass, northern pike, and panfish. Because of the potential value of the property as wildlife habitat, the appraised value will be utilized as match for a future federal NAWCA grant and, if awarded, will result in \$350,000 of federal funding coming to southeast Wisconsin for land acquisition and habitat management.

The Rieger parcel sits along the southwest shore of BML between 287 acres of Department land to the north, and 77 acres of WLMD conservation land to the south. Another 137 acres of Department land abuts the WLMD lands. This acquisition would be a part of 600 acres of contiguous conservation land along the southwest shore of BML.

This parcel is comprised of 64 acres of farmed wetlands with an intensive tile and pumped ditch system, 25 acres of marsh, and 10 acres of upland cropland with a pole shed. The east border of the farmland contains a critical section of berm needed to complete the carp exclusion plan for BML. The berm has been repaired to the north and this section has been planned for repairs since the late 1990's. Without the berm, carp can travel up the Wind Lake canal and into BML, bypassing the electric fish barrier at the Lake's outlet.

This parcel offers excellent wetland restoration potential which would produce a highly productive wetland complex providing habitat for the multitude of wildlife that utilizes the Lake. This property would also provide another public access point to BML with outstanding waterfowl hunting opportunities in addition to quality dove, turkey, and deer hunting and trapping. It would be a destination for wildlife viewing given the bald eagle nest located along the shore just north of this unique property.

The City of Muskego and the Big Muskego Lake District are each offering to donate \$25,000 to the Department to be used toward the purchase of this parcel.

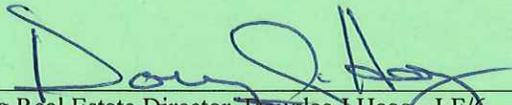
**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the purchase of 99.98 acres of land from the Rieger's for \$700,000 for the Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area in Waukesha County. Also that the Board accept a donation of \$25,000 from the City of Muskego and a donation of \$25,000 from the Big Muskego Lake District to be used toward the purchase of land for the Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area, that a certificate of appreciation be sent to the City of Muskego and Big Muskego Lake District and that an expression of appreciation is made a part of the official records of the Natural Resources Board.

**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

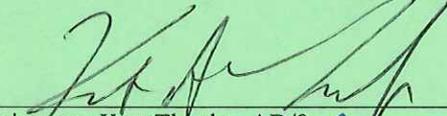
No  Fiscal Estimate Required  
No  Environmental Assessment of Impact Statement Required  
No  Background Memo

Yes  Attached  
Yes  Attached  
Yes  Attached

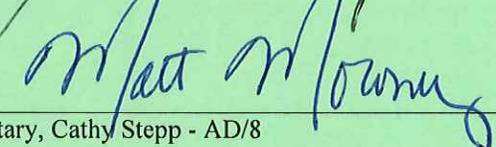
**APPROVED:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Acting Real Estate Director, Douglas J. Haag - LF/6

9-27-13  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator, Kurt Thiede - AD/8

10-9-13  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Cathy Stepp - AD/8

10/10/13  
Date

cc: S. Miller - LF/6  
D. Haag - LF/6  
L. Ross - AD/8  
T. Hauge - WM/6  
J. Morrissey - SER - MILWAUKEE

## CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

FILE REF: WM 60227

DATE: September 27, 2013

TO: Scott Walker

FROM: Cathy Stepp

SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Rieger Tract, File # WM 60227,  
Option Expires November 25, 2013

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area  
Waukesha County

Grantor:

Wallace K. and June M. Rieger Trust  
John and Carol Rieger  
9825 Ridge Road  
Hales Corners, WI 53130

Acres: 99.98Price: \$700,000Appraised Value: \$690,000 and \$715,000Interest: Fee TitleImprovements: Pole shed and storage shedLocation: The property is located 3 miles south of the City of Muskego, in Waukesha County.Land Description: The subject land is level to rolling with marsh on the east side of the parcel.Covertypes Breakdown:

Type	Acreage
Cropland	10
Farmed Wetland	64
Marsh	25.98
Total:	99.98

Zoning: Agricultural and SW Shoreland WetlandPresent Use: Agriculture and RecreationProposed Use: Habitat Restoration and Conservation and RecreationTenure: 53 yearsProperty Taxes: \$625.30Option Date: September 13, 2013Stewardship 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 99.98 acres of land from the Wallace K. and June M. Rieger Trust and John and Carol Rieger for \$700,000 for the Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area in Waukesha County.



Big Muskego Lake (BML) Wildlife Area located in southeast Wisconsin was established in 1999 to protect the area surrounding this unique and productive shallow lake following a successful lake rehabilitation project. Prior to rehabilitation, the lake was a turbid, carp-dominated open expanse of shallow water. The rehabilitation project consisted of a full year drawdown coupled with removal of the rough fish, resulting in a clear water shallow lake containing high quality habitat for gamefish and wildlife. Since that time, the City of Muskego, the Wind Lake Management District (WLMD), and the Department have partnered to protect hundreds of acres around the lake.

BML is recognized as a Wisconsin Important Bird Area. Its proximity to the state's largest urban center notwithstanding, the lake contains significant habitats for wetland birds. It hosts breeding populations of both Forster's and black terns as well as marsh wrens, yellow-headed blackbirds, bitterns, rails, and waterfowl. BML was one of the first places in southeast Wisconsin to which nesting ospreys and bald eagles returned. Great egrets, American white pelicans, and Caspian terns use the lake for foraging, and it also gets significant use as a stopover site by migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. The lake has also become a destination fishery, with abundant populations of quality size largemouth bass, northern pike, and panfish. Because of the potential value of the property as wildlife habitat, the appraised value will be utilized as match for a future federal NAWCA grant and, if awarded, will result in \$350,000 of federal funding coming to southeast Wisconsin for land acquisition and habitat management.

The Rieger parcel is situated along the southwest shore of BML between 287 acres of department land to the north, and 77 acres of WLMD conservation land to the south. Another 137 acres of department land abuts the WLMD lands. This acquisition would be a part of 600 acres of contiguous conservation land along the southwest shore of BML. The department is currently negotiating with WMLD to allow public access and recreation on their parcel.

The Rieger property is comprised of 64 acres of farmed wetlands with an intensive tile and pumped ditch system, 25 acres of marshy lake frontage, and 10 acres of upland cropland with a pole shed. The east border of the farmland contains a critical section of berm needed to complete the carp exclusion plan for BML. The berm has been repaired to the north and this section has been planned for repairs since the late 1990's. Without the berm, carp can travel up the Wind Lake canal and into BML, bypassing the electric fish barrier at the Lake's outlet.

This property would provide another public access point to BML and offer outstanding waterfowl hunting opportunity in addition to quality dove, turkey, and deer hunting and trapping. It would be a destination for wildlife viewing given the bald eagle nest located along the shore just north of this unique property.

The City of Muskego and the Big Muskego Lake District are each offering to donate \$25,000 to the Department to be used toward the purchase of this parcel.

3. LAND MANAGEMENT:

The Big Muskego Wildlife Area lies within the Department's Southern Fox Wildlife Administrative Area and will be managed by the Waukesha/Walworth Wildlife Management work unit. This work unit consists of two permanent Wildlife Technicians and one permanent Wildlife Biologist, along with several LTEs. Future management of the site will include prescribed burning of the wetlands to promote native plant species, conducting wetland restoration on the farmed wetlands, and using sharecropping to install food plots and grassland on the upland crop fields. The restoration would produce a highly productive wetland complex adjacent to BML, providing habitat for the multitude of wildlife that utilize the Lake. Restoration funding would be provided from a federal NAWCA grant and/or state waterfowl stamp funds. The pole shed will be leased back to the Rieger's for 3 years, and will be used, along with the storage shed, to store land management equipment for the BML Wildlife Area when the lease ends.

4. FINANCING:

\$25,000 from the City of Muskego and \$25,000 in Big Muskego Lake Protection funds are anticipated. \$650,000 in State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated.

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$2,671,000	\$1,147,622

5. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE BIG MUSKEGO LAKE WILDLIFE AREA:

Established: 1999  
Acres Purchased to Date: 639.94  
Acquisition Goal: 3,800.00  
Percent Complete: 16.84 %  
Cost to Date: \$2,253,322.15

6. APPRAISAL 1:

Appraiser: Linn Duesterbeck  
Valuation Date: July 30, 2013  
Appraised Value: \$690,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Agricultural and Recreational

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 99.98 acres @ \$6,201.24 per acre: \$620,000.00 + \$70,000 improvement value
- b. market data approach used, 5 comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$4,161.00 - \$6,481.00 per acre

Appraisal Review: Gregory Markus - 8/13/2013

APPRAISAL 2:

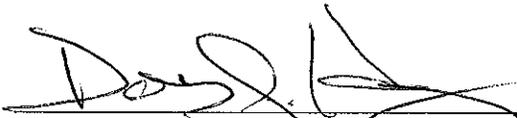
Appraiser: Philip Vander Male  
Valuation Date: July 26, 2013  
Appraised Value: \$715,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Residential with agriculture and recreation

Allocation of Values:

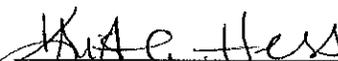
- a. land: 99.98 acres @ \$6,651.33 per acre: \$665,000.00 + \$50,000 improvement value
- b. market data approach used, 4 comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$4,180.00 - \$8,284.00 per acre

Appraisal Review: Gregory Markus - 8/13/2013

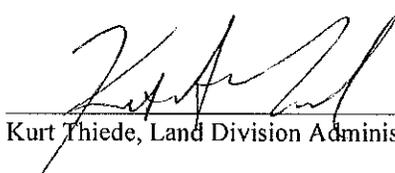
RECOMMENDED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Douglas J Haag, Acting Real Estate Director

9-27-13  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kristin A. Hess, Bureau of Legal Services

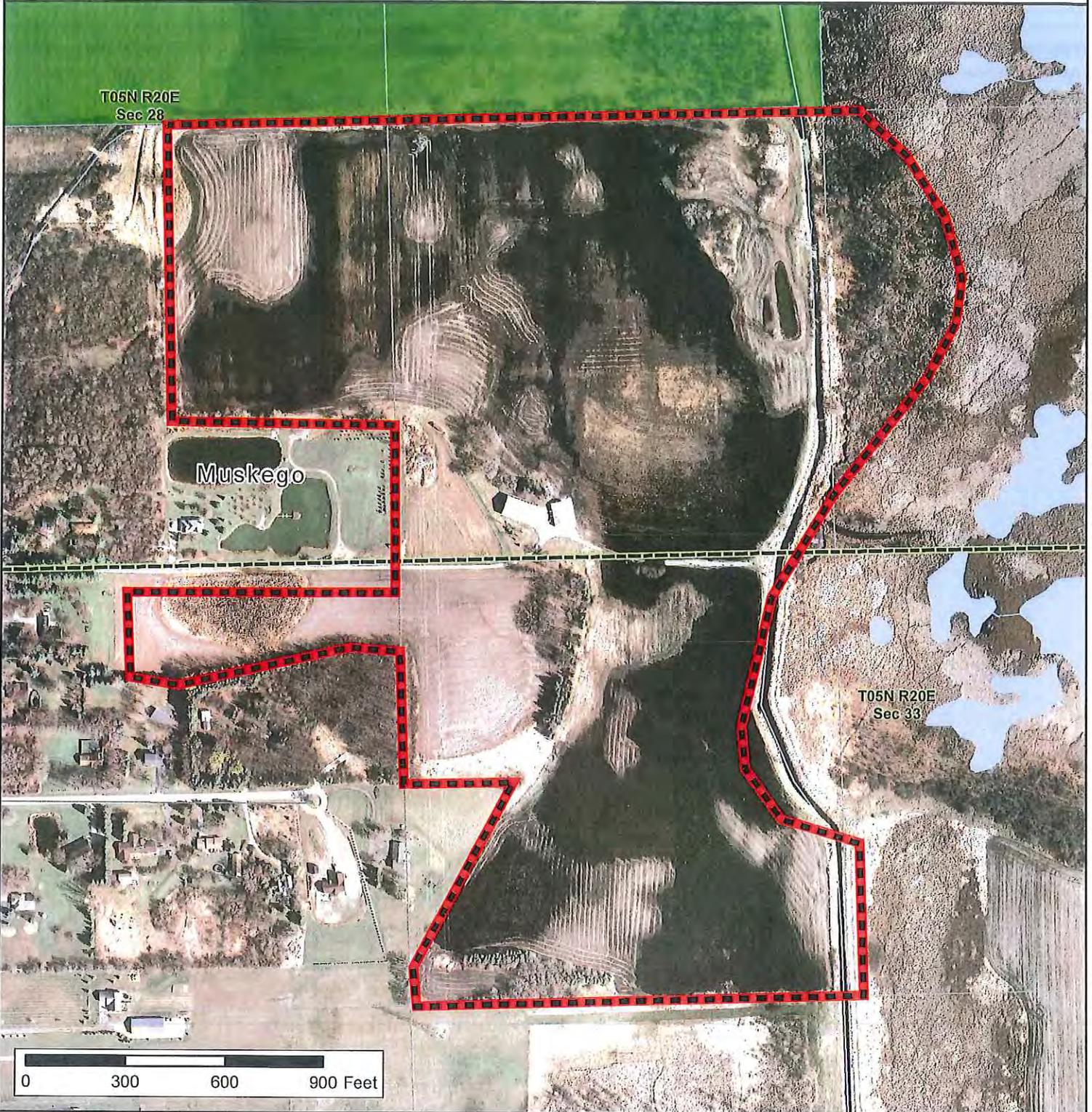
9/30/13  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kurt Thiede, Land Division Administrator

10/9/13  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# John Rieger - Fee

T5N R30E Sec 28 & 33, Town of Muskego, Waukesha County



**Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area**



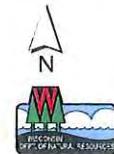
**Subject**

 DNR Fee Title Land

 DNR Easement Land

 Section Line

 QQ Section Lines



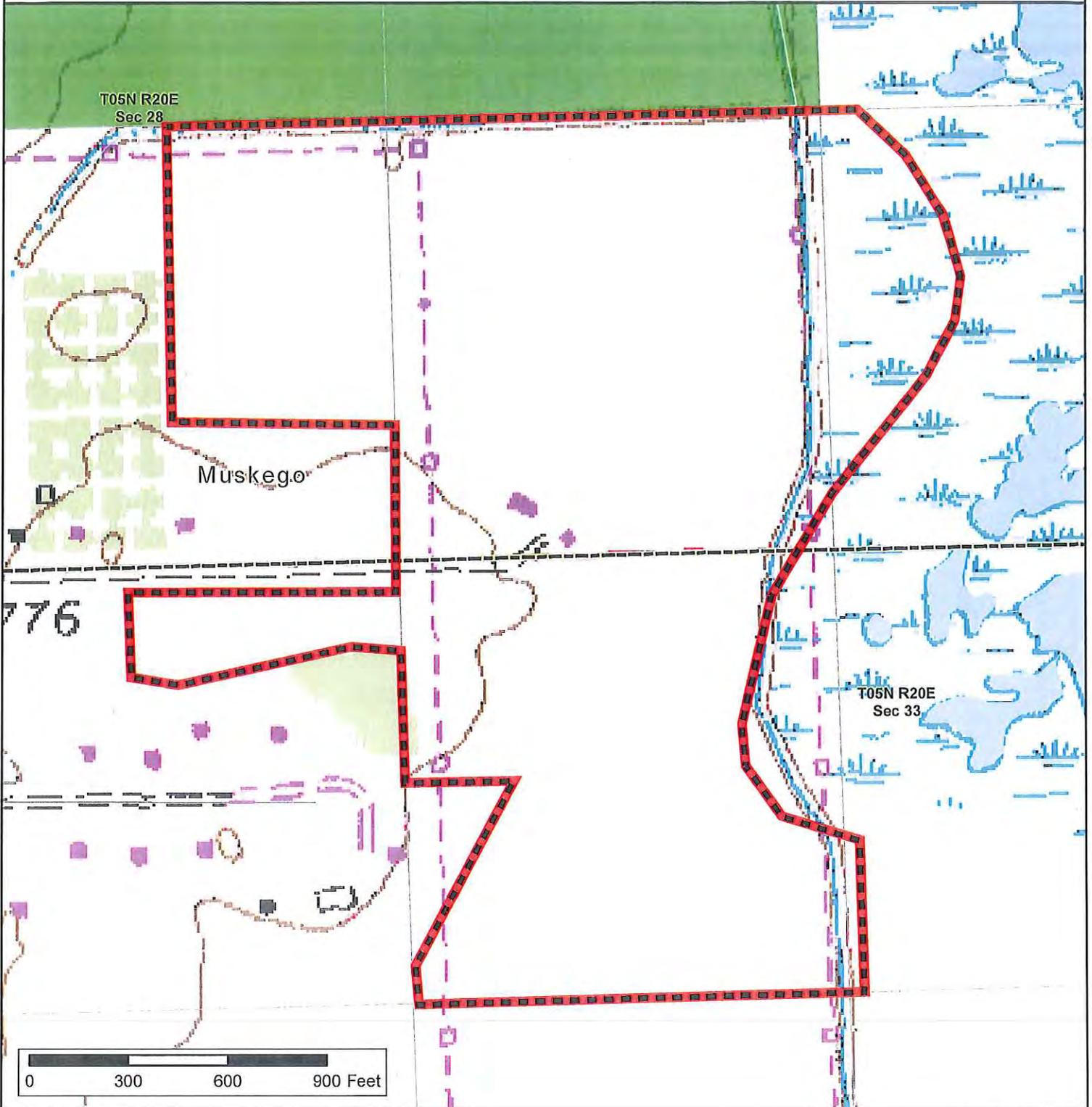
Sep 25, 2013 kmh

Real Estate Section  
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

The data shown on this map have been obtained from various sources, and are of varying age, reliability and resolution. This map is not intended to be used for navigation, nor is this map an authoritative source of information about legal land ownership or public access. Users of this map should confirm the ownership of land through other means in order to avoid trespassing. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made regarding accuracy, applicability for a particular use, completeness, or legality of the information depicted on this map.

# John Rieger - Fee

T5N R30E Sec 28 & 33, Town of Muskego, Waukesha County



## Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area

 Subject

 DNR Fee Title Land

 DNR Easement Land

 Section Line

 QQ Section Lines



Sep 25, 2013 kmh

Real Estate Section  
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

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**John Rieger - Fee**  
**Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area**

**WM 60227**

**T5N R30E Sec 28 & 33**  
 Town of Muskego  
 Waukesha County  
 99.98 Deed Acres

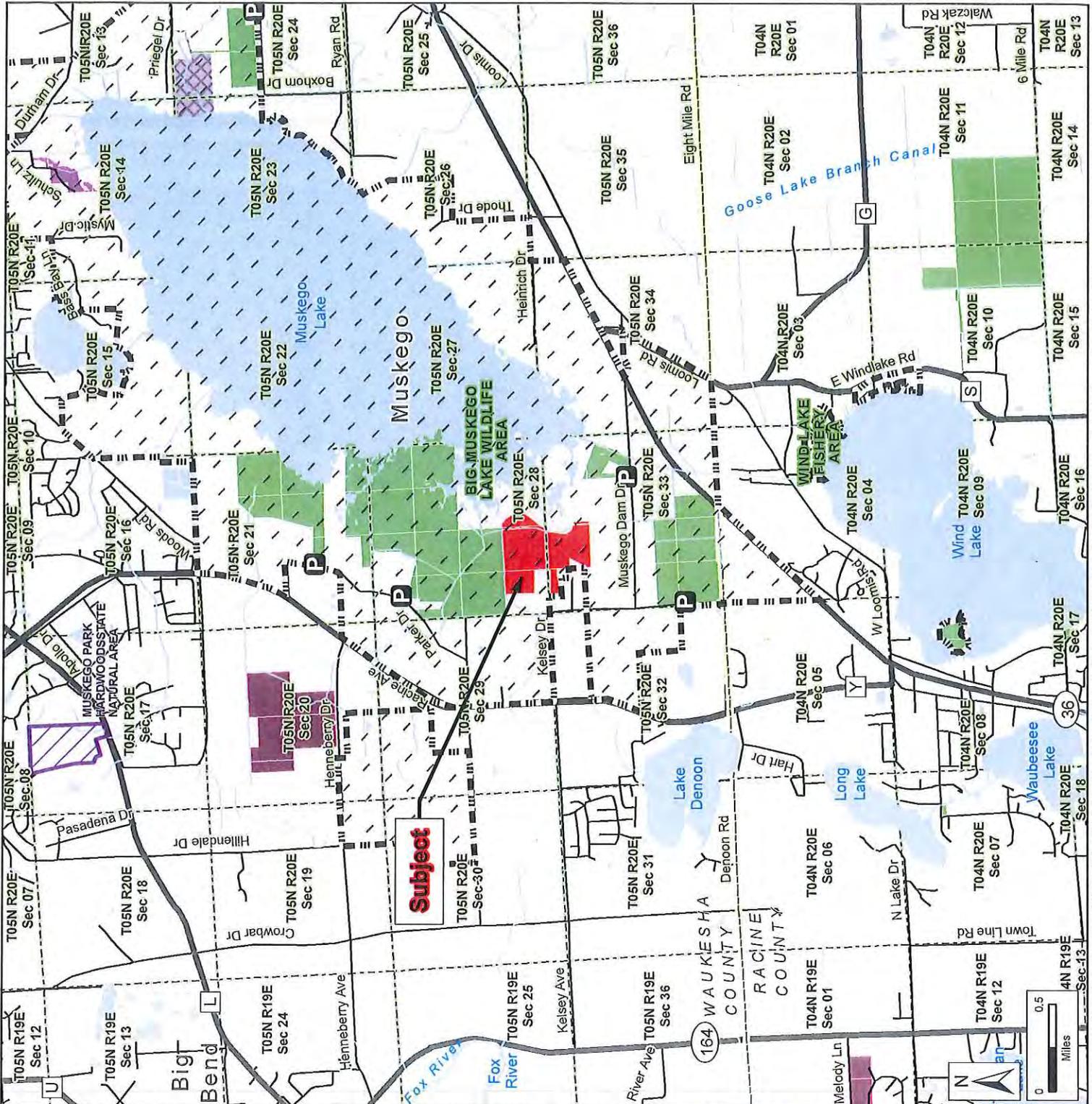
**Subject**

-  DNR Fee Title
-  DNR Easement
-  DNR Easement (Closed to Public Access)
-  DNR Project Boundary
-  State Natural Area
-  PLSS Section Line
-  QQ Section Boundary
-  Public Land - Funded by Stewardship Grants

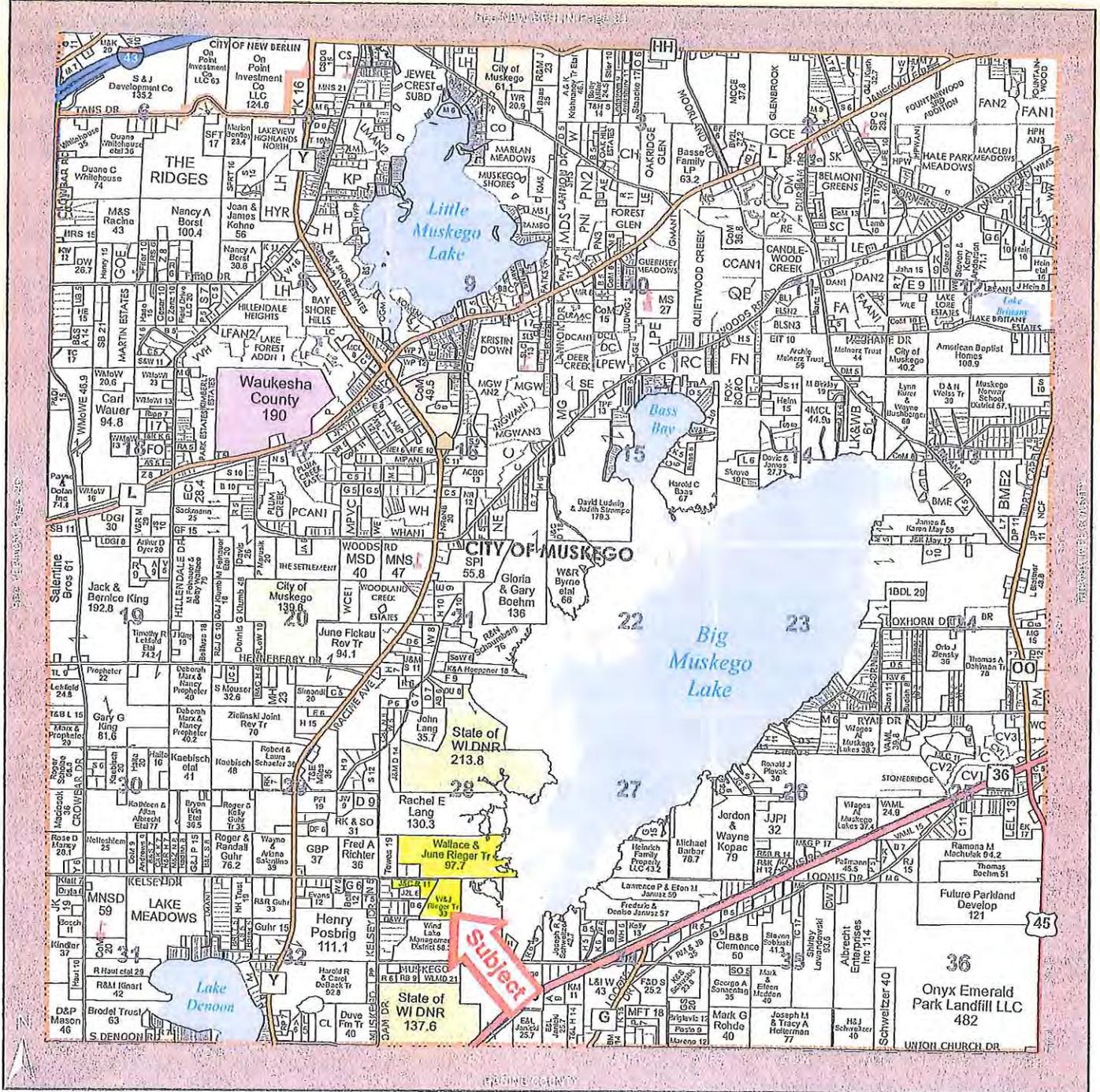


**Location of Property**

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
 Bureau of Facilities of Lands  
 Map Created: Sep 25, 2013  
 kmh



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Waukesha County  
Park System



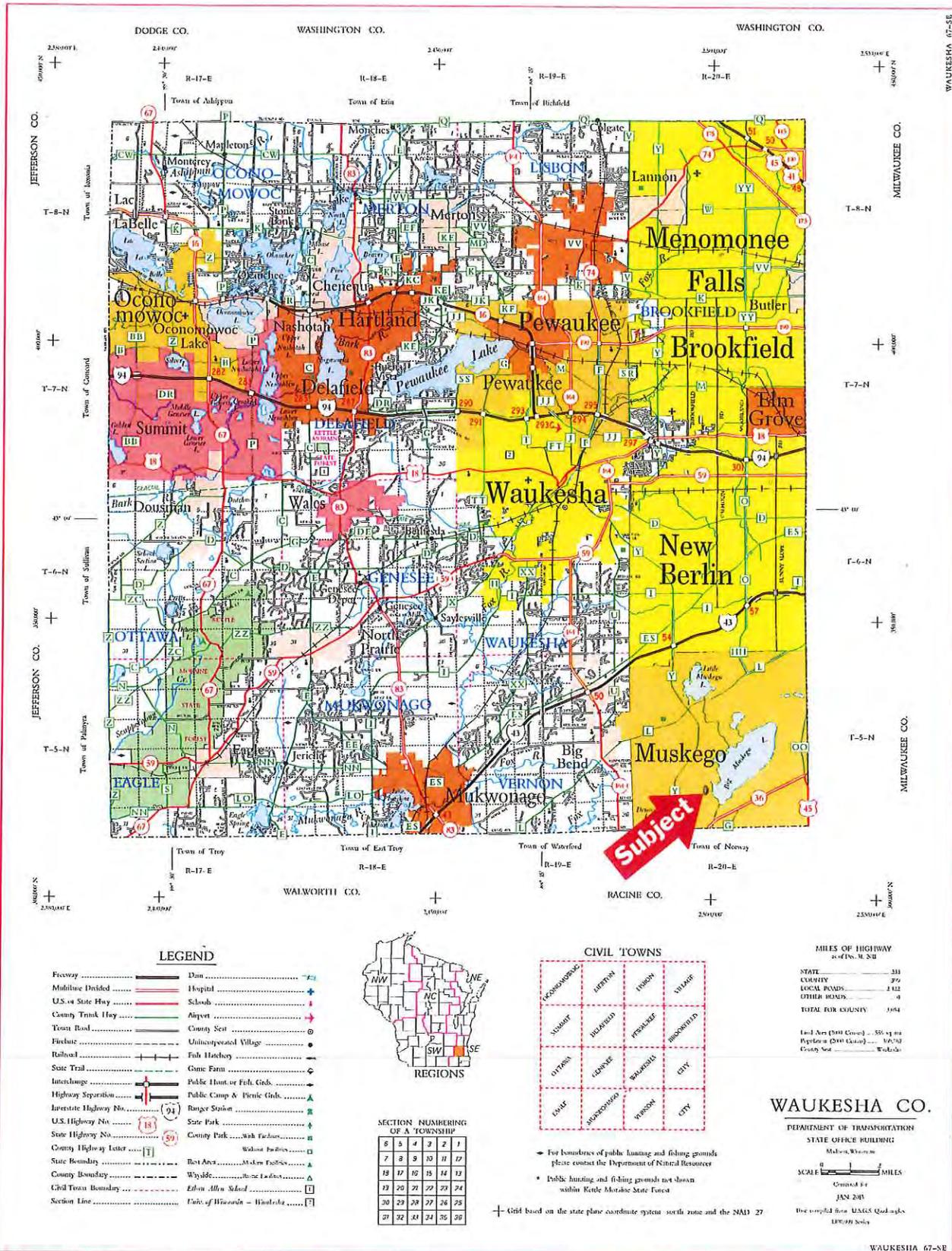
1000 Northview Rd.  
Waukesha, WI 53188  
(262) 548-7200

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DODGE CO. WASHINGTON CO. WASHINGTON CO.

JEFFERSON CO. MILWAUKEE CO. MILWAUKEE CO.

JEFFERSON CO. MILWAUKEE CO.

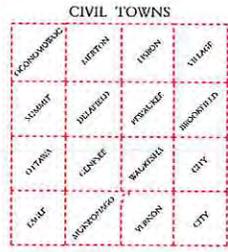
WAIWORTH CO. RACINE CO. RACINE CO.

- LEGEND**
- Freeway
  - Multi-lane Divided
  - U.S. or State Hwy
  - County Trunk Hwy
  - Town Road
  - Firchute
  - Railroad
  - State Trail
  - Interchange
  - Highway Separation
  - Interstate Highway No.
  - U.S. Highway No.
  - State Highway No.
  - County Highway Letter
  - State Boundary
  - County Boundary
  - Grid Town Boundary
  - Section Line
  - Dam
  - Hospital
  - Schools
  - Airport
  - County Seat
  - Unincorporated Village
  - Fish Hatchery
  - Game Farm
  - Public Hunt or Fish. Gids.
  - Public Camp & Picnic Gids.
  - Ranger Station
  - State Park
  - County Park
  - Rest Area
  - Wyside
  - Edon Allen School
  - Trunk of Wisconsin - Waukesha



**SECTION NUMBERING OF A TOWNSHIP**

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



For locations of public hunting and fishing grounds please contact the Department of Natural Resources

Public hunting and fishing grounds not shown within Kettle Moraine State Forest

**MILES OF HIGHWAY**  
as of Dec. 31, 1988

STATE	331
COUNTY	376
LOCAL PAVES	1,122
OTHER ROUNDS	9
TOTAL FOUR COUNTRIES	1,838

1-in-1 Area (2000 Census) - 220 sq. mi.  
Population (2000 Census) - 147,028  
County Seat - Waukesha

**WAUKESHA CO.**  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
STATE OFFICE BUILDING  
Madison, Wisconsin  
SCALE 1" = 1 MILES  
Created by  
JAN 2007  
Data compiled from USGS Quad maps  
1870-1980 Series